

## **Meath County Council - Decade of Centenaries**

### **2020 Proposed Programme of Events**

#### **Introduction – Decade of Centenaries**

The period from 1912 to 1922 was one of the most eventful in Ireland's history. From the campaign for Home Rule, through World War One and the Easter Rising of 1916 to the foundation of the Free State, this was a decade of great change. Campaigns for social reforms went hand in hand with political events. The Decade of Centenaries programme aims to commemorate the steps that Ireland took between 1912 and 1922 in a tolerant, inclusive and respectful way.

#### **Decade of Centenaries – 2020**

Meath County Council is committed to delivering a significant Decade of Centenaries programme in 2020, including a number of events in remembrance of the major incidents that took place throughout the county.

The main focus of the Meath Commemorations programme during 2020 will be in Oldcastle and Trim. During the year, the transformative events that occurred 100 years ago will be marked including:

- the death of Seamus Cogan, O/C 5<sup>th</sup> Oldcastle Battalion of the Irish Volunteers (July);
- the Sacking of Trim (September); and
- the local elections of June 1920 (June).

These formal events will include, as appropriate, elements such as flag-raising, wreath-laying and complementary cultural activities. These formal events will be complemented by a series of local lectures and exhibitions.

As with all previous commemorations during the Decade of Centenaries, The Battle of Ashbourne (2016) and the Francis Ledwidge Centenary (2017) the programme will be led locally by the local authority and delivered in partnership with the relevant stakeholders. The relatives of the deceased, the local communities and historical societies will all have an important role to play in devising and delivering these commemorative events.

The local authority's objective is to ensure that the centenary of the Struggle for Independence is remembered with an appropriate, meaningful, proportionate and sensitive programme, which recognises the legitimacy of all traditions and values mutual respect and historical accuracy.

As the local authority is responsible for leading the Decade of Centenaries programme locally, it is vital that the local authority supports initiatives which create opportunities for people *of* all traditions to explore the differing perspectives on our shared history in a respectful environment. Meath County Council will provide a supportive structure that ensures that the very difficult events that occurred during the Struggle for Independence are remembered within communities in a measured and non-partisan manner. The local authority is committed to a programme of respectful remembrance and reconciliation.

The 2020 programme will have a broad scope, which acknowledges the military activity during the Struggle for Independence, as well as the many other dimensions interwoven with the conflict, including political, social, cultural and economic aspects. It focuses on the significant democratic achievements of the period, in putting in place a new parliament and the new administrative structures of the State.

#### **Publication – Trim September 1920**

To further aid understanding of this critical period in our history the local authority is publishing a new volume *Trim September 1920*. This volume will be published on the centenary of the tumultuous events which occurred in the town of Trim a century ago, and forms a vital part of County Meath's Decade of Centenaries commemorations. By presenting contemporary accounts, documents and images, it is hoped that this book will contribute to our understanding of our history. The book will reproduce facsimiles of original courts martial and prison documents, contemporary newspaper accounts, stills of contemporary newsreel footage, and rare photographs of the town in the immediate aftermath of the burning.

#### **Engagement – Supporting Role of the Council**

The local authority is committed to continued engagement and partnership, throughout 2020, with the many stakeholders including our local cultural institutions; learning institutions; custodians of records; the media and creative communities who are delivering commemorative initiatives of great depth, creativity and integrity. Thoughtful and sensitive participation will be critical in supporting the local conversation about the events that took place 100 years ago, by encouraging responsible, inclusive and authentic citizen engagement and debate, which is respectful of the local context.

The Council will therefore support the Hindsight history festival in association with Hinterland and RTE. The festival will take place from the 20<sup>th</sup> -22<sup>nd</sup> March in Kells and the programme includes a full day devoted to the War of Independence in the county.

#### **Overview of Council Supported Activities - 2020**

##### **Key formal events**

**8<sup>th</sup> June 2020** – Meath County Council – AGM – event to mark the Local Elections of June 1920

**19<sup>th</sup> July 2020** - Commemorative event to mark the death of Commandant Seamus Cogan, Oldcastle (and Patrick McDonnell)

**26<sup>th</sup> September 2020** – Commemorative event to mark the Sacking of Trim

##### **Complementary events**

**20-22<sup>nd</sup> March 2020** – Hindsight History Festival, Kells

**June** – Launch of Meath County Council publication - *Trim September 1920*