

Sligo Diaspora Newsletter

June 2022

Sligo: Live Green, Invest Smart, Visit Sustainably

Issue No.1

Andy Rogers

Sligo Business Network in London

Sligo Walks

Website featuring over 60 walking trails

The Sligo. Brand

Promoting Sligo as a world-class place to Live, Invest & Visit

Bronze sculpture of W. B. Yeats,
Stephen Street, Sligo.

Image taken from a scene in "*Sligo, so much
more than a beautiful place*" online video.



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Message from the Cathaoirleach of Sligo County Council



A Chara,

On behalf of Sligo County Council you are welcome to the very first edition of the Sligo Diaspora newsletter.

One of the aims of the Sligo Diaspora Strategy 2019-2024 was to help foster and encourage the connection between Sligo and its Diaspora. This newsletter will help to inform our diaspora of news and events from around County Sligo.

While developing the Diaspora strategy, it was found that there were over 960,000 people from across the world with links to County Sligo.

Sligo is proud of the achievements of its diaspora many of whom have gone on to great success while always maintaining their links to Sligo, through music, culture, sport and business.

Over the last year or so Diaspora initiatives have included a successful launch of an online video focusing on Sligo's diaspora.

The video was entitled '**Do you often think of home...**' and was an outstanding success receiving over 70,000 views on the Sligo. brand's social media channels and receiving warm praise and support from people at home and abroad.

Comhaltas produced a special programme called '**The Sligo Tunesmith**', that featured musicians from both sides of the Atlantic playing many of the tunes composed and made famous by James 'Lad' O'Beirne that was broadcast on New Years eve 2020.

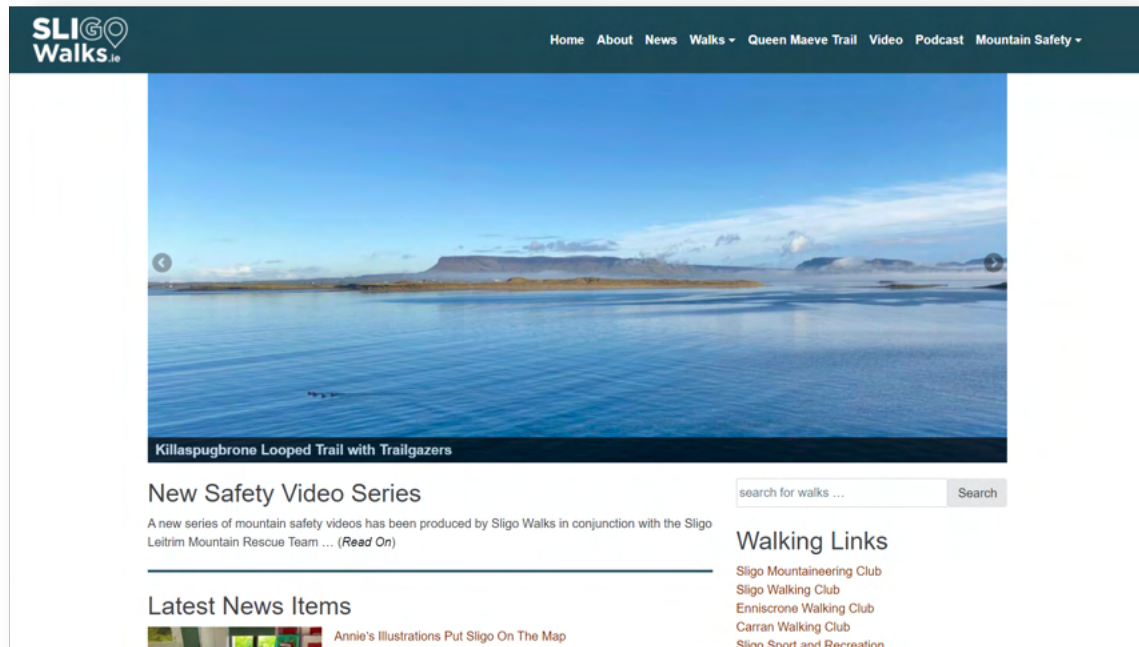
In addition to this new Sligo Diaspora Newsletter, a new landing page on **Sligo.ie** has also been created that will be a central home to news and events related to our diaspora.

Cuirfear fáilte is fiche roimh an diaspóra go Sligeach i gcónaí agus leanfaimid orainn ag tógáil agus ag cothú an chaidrimh atá againn leis na dlúthchairde seo dár gcuid.

Cllr. Michael Clarke
Cathaoirleach of Sligo County Council

SLIGO WALKS

Sligowalks.ie hosts information on over 60 walking trails and routes in County Sligo



Queen Maeve Trail

Sligo's range of walking and recreational trails are amongst the most diverse in the country and Sligowalks.ie is a central website that provides details on over sixty of these trails around County Sligo.

The development of the website is a collaborative initiative by Sligo County



Union Rock

Council, Sligo LEADER Partnership and Sligo Tourism with support from Fáilte Ireland and the Wild Atlantic Way.

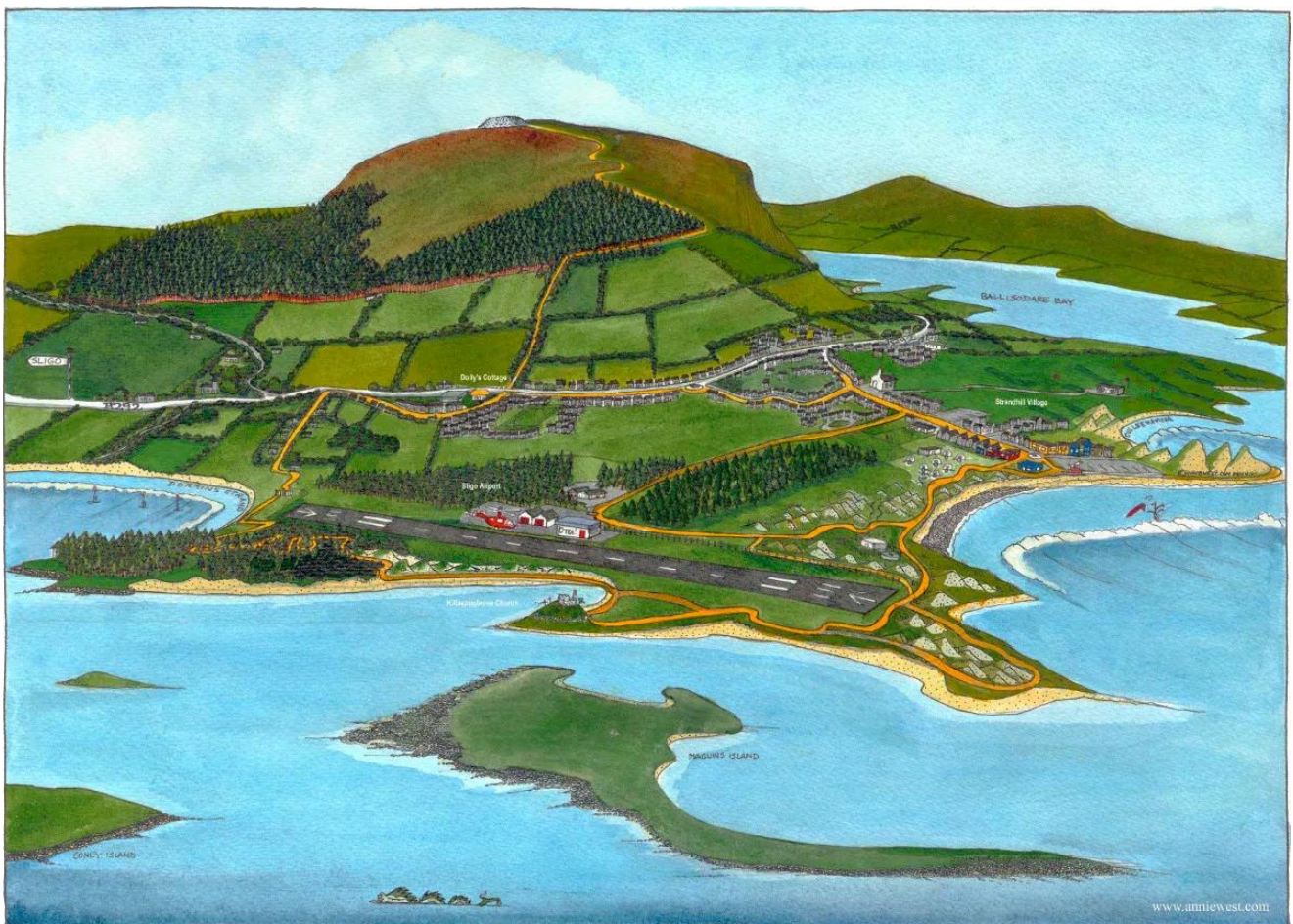
The variety of walks and trails featured on the website include woodland trails, upland trails, coastal walks and urban walks. Many of these trails have received

recent upgrades including the magnificent Knocknashee and Knocknarea upland walking trails, the Tubbercurry trail forest walk and the spectacular Aughris coastal walk located right on the edge of the Wild Atlantic Way.

The recent upgrades to Tubbercurry Trail forest walk funded through the Town and Village scheme have extended this amenity by a further 1km. The entire walk combined now has a total of 5km walking network and is extremely popular with local residents.

Additionally, the popular Queen Maeve Trail on Knocknarea, has recently been upgraded with new interactive and directional signage to enhance the visitors experience.

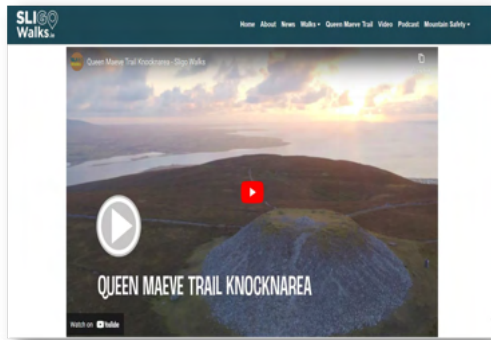
14 new signs on the trail inform walkers of the story of Queen Maeve and also of local biodiversity information in the area. The signs incorporate a QR code directing visitors to additional information at each stop on the loop. The signs help to bring an extra element to the trail and allow visitors to learn more about the local nature and archaeology while enjoying the scenery of the area.



Killaspugbrone Coastal Walk

Illustration by Annie West

The Sligo Walks team note that the most popular routes include the Benbulbin-Gortarowey Trail in North Sligo, the Queen Maeve Trail on Knocknarea in Strandhill and The Devils Chimney near Glencar lake.



Screenshot Sligowalks.ie

While many of the walks and recreation trails featured on the Sligowalks.ie can be completed in under an hour, the website also

provides details on long distance way marked trails including the Miners Way and Historical Trail and the Sligo Way.

Michael Carty, Sligo County Council is a member of the Sligo Walks team and says that:

"the spectacular landscape of County Sligo lends itself naturally to the development of recreational walking trails and due to the large diversity of the trails in the county there is something for everyone".

The website is updated regularly with news, maps, images and mountain safety information. For further information visit Sligowalks.ie.

(Photo credits Eddie Lee & Sligo Walks)



Keash Hill Trail

Sligo Diaspora Interview

**Andy Rogers
London**



HARNESSING THE POWER OF SLIGO'S DIASPORA

The Sligo. Brand promoting living, investing and visiting Sligo, identifies and values the Sligo Diaspora as having an enormous contribution to make to the social, cultural, and economic development of Sligo county. Sligo County Council has developed a Diaspora strategy which highlights a range of relevant themes from Sport, heritage, and Community to Job creation.

With some 960,000 people worldwide claiming ties to Sligo, the county's diaspora is a massive resource when it comes to strengthening the county's economic and social fortunes.

We aim in this article to take a look at examples of the Sligo Diaspora who have made remarkable contributions to promoting the Sligo message at home and away.

While he may have left his home in the townland of Dromore on the Easkey River 40 years ago, Andy Rodgers never lost touch with his native Sligo. Over the past decade he's been connecting Sligonians in London and keeping them abreast of developments at home.

When he retired as a Senior Executive with Bank of Ireland based in the English capital, Andy – who lives near Watford with his wife Brigid – set up the Sligo in London Business Network.

Over the years he'd seen how other Irish counties plugged into their diaspora in London and felt that, while Sligo people were very modest about their achievements, there was a need to bring them together to tell their stories and to hear about developments back home.

Andy saw that there was a massive untapped potential in bringing Sligo people together informally for networking sessions. Since its inception in the early noughties firm friendships have formed within the network and members have learned about the businesses fellow Sligo people are running in London.

Andy says it was important to formally set up a network given the sheer size of London because you just don't meet people unless you actually plan it.

Some 500 people are on the contact list for the network now, a list that Andy describes as a really interesting mix of people. Meeting typically twice a year the format is simple: people get together at a central location to chat and hear someone from IT Sligo, (now the ATU) or the local Chamber of Commerce update them on developments at home.

Andy says keeping people abreast of changes at home is really important because in their working lives people are so busy, that they may not know of just how much is going on in Sligo and what changes are taking place.



Andy with his award of Freeman of the City of London pictured with his wife Brigid

Being a regular visitor back home, Andy has first-hand testimony of how much has

changed in Sligo to deliver to the Sligonians abroad. He believes that communicating the developments to the diaspora is more important now than ever as the culture of remote working explodes and more opportunities open up for emigrants to return home to work and raise their families.

From his standpoint of looking in from outside he believes that the biggest driver of change is the designation of IT Sligo as part of the country's newest university, The Atlantic Technological University (ATU).

"Covid-19 has made a lot of people think about the lives they're leading. A lot of people are working from home very successfully," says Andy, pointing out that the challenge of encouraging them to come home may not be difficult in the current environment"

As part of its county-wide diaspora strategy, Sligo County Council wants to tap into those people who identify as Sligonians abroad with the aim of strengthening Sligo's family social and economically.

The strategy also tells the story of what Sligo has to offer as a place to work, visit and return home to from recreational activities to good schools and accessibility.

According to Andy, now is the time to reach out even further to the Sligo diaspora, many of whom spread their wings after gaining a top class education in Sligo.

Diaspora Video: *Do you often think of home?*

As part of the **Sligo: Live Invest Visit** brand initiative, a Diaspora video was launched online in March 2021. The video was entitled "**Do you often think of home?**" and acted as a call to the global Sligo Diaspora family and reflecting on the beauty and potential of the county in offering a desirable lifestyle in a thriving and increasingly ambitious Sligo.

Many people raised and educated in Sligo have gone onto great things throughout the world. The video was a way of reaching out to say that Sligo looks forward to welcoming you home when the time is right.

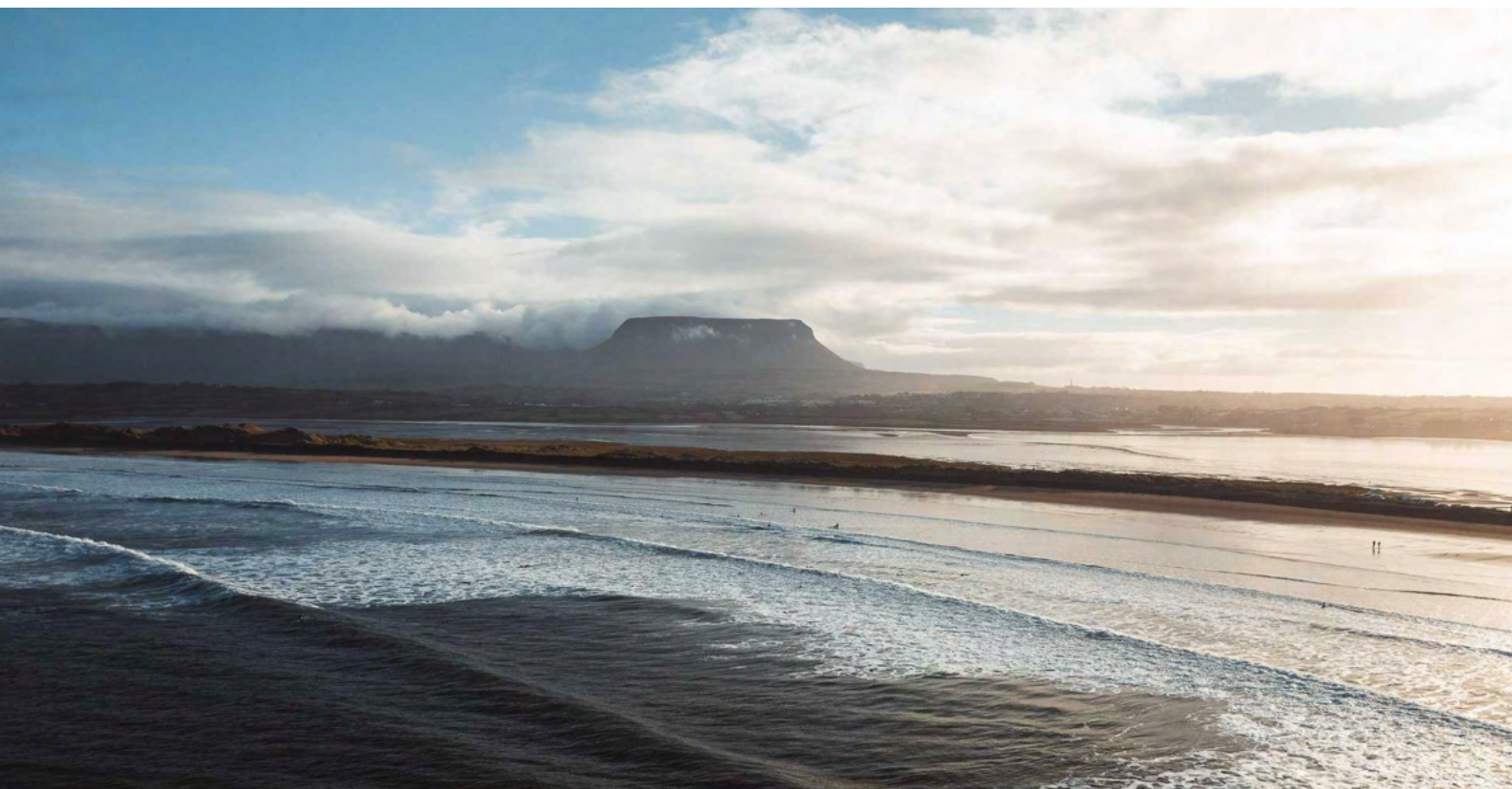
The video exceeded all expectations and has been viewed in excess of

70,000 times across the various Sligo social media channels and those of other local partners online channels with whom the video was shared.

The video can be viewed on www.sligo.ie/diaspora or the **Sligo: Live Invest Visit** YouTube channel.



Screenshot from the video and cover image of Sligo Diaspora Newsletter, Issue 1



Scene from "Do you often think of home" video

New Diaspora Landing Page on Sligo.ie

A new Diaspora landing page has been developed on the Sligo.ie website.

The new page is an extension of the **Sligo: Live Invest Visit** initiative's ambition to support Sligo as a world class place in which to live, invest and visit.

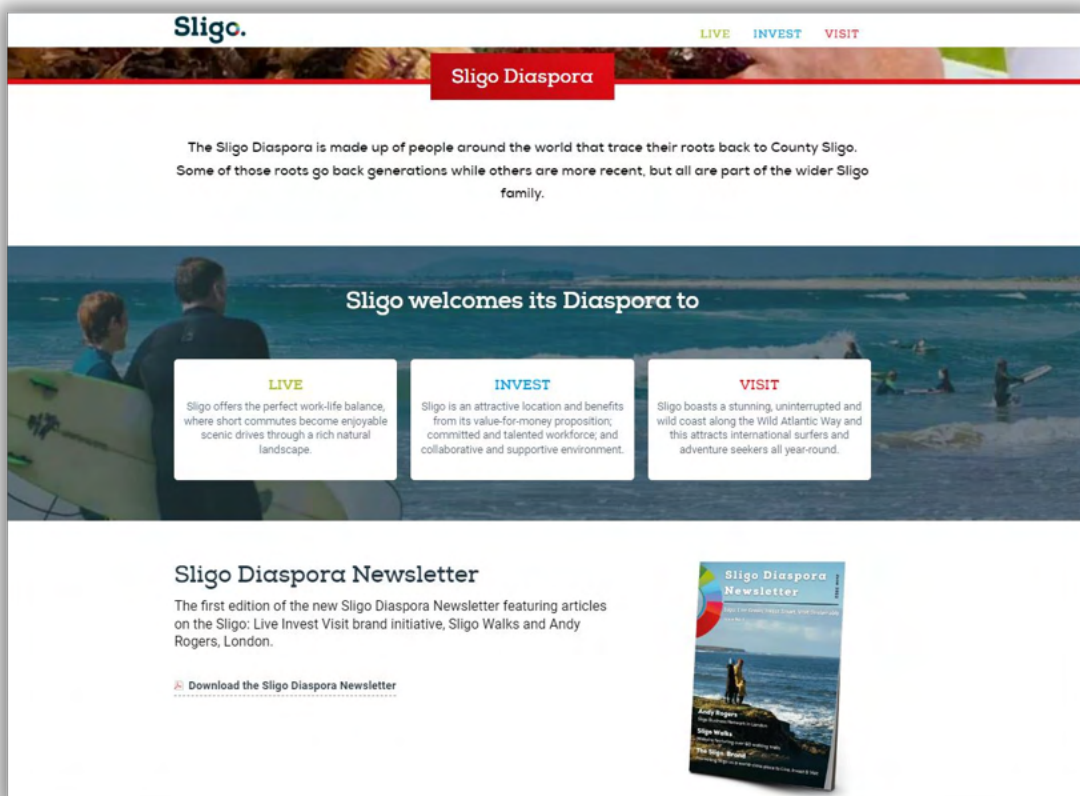
Building on this concept, this new Diaspora landing page on Sligo.ie will assist with maintaining the link with the Sligo global Diaspora family and will contain news and information relevant to the four main themes of the **County Sligo Diaspora Strategy 2019 – 2024, Reaching Out... Reaching In.**

Building on this concept, this new Diaspora landing page on Sligo.ie will assist with maintaining the link with the Sligo global Diaspora family and

will contain news and information relevant to the four main themes of the County Sligo Diaspora Strategy 2019 – 2024, Reaching Out... Reaching In.

The strategy notes that, “Sligo’s Diaspora is made up of the wider Sligo family who do not live in the County because they have moved or were born somewhere else, either in Ireland or overseas. That wider Sligo family is indisputably made up of people who have their roots here going back a few generations as well as those who have left much more recently (including members of the ‘Affinity Diaspora’, people who had migrated to Sligo from elsewhere but who have now returned home).

The new page can be found at: www.sligo.ie/visit/diaspora



Sligo Festivals 2022

BALLYGAWLEY MUSIC FESTIVAL

A 3-night music festival taking place over the weekend of 15th-17th July. The festival takes place in Ballygawley Village, Co. Sligo and began in 2019, attracting a crowd of over 1800 people. An early bird weekend pass can be purchased for €50 and this years line-up features performances from Patrick Feeney, The Whistlin' Donkeys and Derek Ryan.

CAIRDE ARTS FESTIVAL

A music and theatre festival taking place from 1st-10th July 2022. Cairde Sligo is a non-profit organisation primarily funded by The Arts Council and Sligo County Council, with a number of other sponsors and patrons funding the organisation. The 2021 event featured an impressive 20 events with 8,242 in person audience members and 2,781 audience members tuning in online, giving the festival National and International recognition. The 2022 event brochure can be downloaded from www.cairdefestival.com.

CONNACHT FLEADH

The Connacht Fleadh 2022 will take place from 20th June to 3rd July 2022 across Sligo and will feature the 'Sligo Sounds Good' concerts, music sessions, competitions, lectures, Irish language activities, street entertainment, music education and receptions. In the past, performances have been broadcast on TG4 and some will be again this year. The festival attracts viewers from all over the world, particularly those with an interest in Irish music and culture who are based in the UK and USA.

BLACK PIG FESTIVAL

This weekend- long festival is based on a folklore story of a wild boar that was said to have magical powers. A 4m long sculpture of the Black Pig can be found in Enniscrone Village. This years event will feature live music, street entertainment, a fun run, family fun day, a fireworks display and much more.



Sligo Festivals 2022

REMEMBERING THE ARMADA

This commemorative festival celebrates the Spanish Armada for one weekend in September each year and is based in Grange and Streedagh, Co. Sligo. It marks the wreckage of three Spanish Armada ships during Winter storms at Streedagh Beach in 1588 which led to the loss of over 1,100 Spanish lives. The 2021 festival featured a Lecture series, Childrens beach art, a Memorial service, Trail cycle and a Road run and walk.

ENNISCRONE SHOW

The Enniscrone Show will take place Sunday 3rd July 2022 at the Enniscrone Show field at Castleconnor Community Centre, Corballa, Co. Sligo. The show hosts competitions in a variety of categories including Art and photography, Cattle, Cookery, Dogs, Farm produce, Flowers, Horses, Horticulture, Poultry, Sheep and goats and more. The event aims to showcase all that communities in rural Ireland have to offer.

TUBBERCURRY OLD FAIR DAY FESTIVAL

Taking place from 6th-20th Aug 2022 in Tubbercurry, South Sligo, the highlight of the Tubbercurry Old Fair Day Festival is the Old Fair Day which transports visitors back to yesteryear as they walk through the Old Heritage Village. The Old Fair Day features live animals, live demonstrations of thatching, weaving, butter-making, trashing, pottery making, rush work and more.

SLIGO LIVE

Sligo Live has ben running music events throughout 2022, but their main festival will take place in October 2022 with performances from Dylan Moran, Tommy Tiernan and Gavin James. Sligo Live has brought a number of notable acts to Sligo in recent times, with Irish band The Coronas playing in the Knocknarea Arena, IT Sligo in April 2022.



Sligo Festivals 2022

WILD ATLANTIC WAY SHANTY FESTIVAL

This music festival takes place in Rosses Point, Sligo's maritime village on the Wild Atlantic Way, from 17th- 19th Jun 2022. The festival supports the work of the RNLI and hosts sessions, concerts and open mic nights for local and international Shanty music groups. There will also be literary events, workshops, informal music sessions and a sailing race, among other events taking place throughout the weekend.

COLEMAN TRADITIONAL FESTIVAL

A traditional Irish music festival taking place across 5 days from 21st-25th Aug 2022 in Gurteen, South Sligo. The festival has been running for 47 years and features traditional concerts of music, song and dance for music lovers young and old. There are also children's arts and crafts classes and family-friendly events. In previous years the festival has attracted international visitors from the USA and Germany.

YEATS INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL

Taking place this year from 28th July- 5th Aug, The Yeats Summer School is back for its 63rd year. The event hosts an academic programme of lectures, seminars and workshops with poetry, tours, music, readings and cultural events. The festival is organised and ran by the Yeats Society Sligo, based in the Yeats Building in Sligo Town centre and honours W.B Yeats contribution and influence on Irish poetry.

SLIGO JAZZ SUMMER SCHOOL

The Sligo Jazz Project Summer School will take place from 19th-24th July 2022. Attendees will have access to workshops, masterclasses and ensemble workshops, with a performance scheduled for the end of the week. The Summer School is held in the IT Sligo and attracts young musicians from near and far.



INVEST UPDATE

● Amcor announce creation of 75 jobs in Sligo



Amcor are a global leader in developing and producing responsible packaging solutions.

The announcement in April 2022 indicated that the new jobs are being created in roles including engineering, machine operators, manufacturing technicians and quality assurance.

● Arrotek announce plans to create 100 new jobs in Sligo



Arrotek are a medical device design consultancy based in Finisklin Business Park.

The company announced in May that it plans to create up to 100 new jobs as part of its expansion for positions including design engineers, project managers, quality, production, customer service and administration

● Advantio to create 40 new jobs in Sligo



Advantio, a cybersecurity provider announced in January 2022 that it is to establish its European Cybersecurity HQ in Sligo, creating approximately 40 jobs over the next three years.

● Launch of Atlantic Technological University



The Atlantic Technological University (Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta an Atlantaigh) was officially launched on April 4th by the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris TD.

● LEO Sligo client business create 212 jobs in Sligo in 2021

The Local Enterprise Offices annual results were positive for Sligo. LEO Sligo supported 216 businesses in the manufacturing and internationally traded sectors that between them created an additional 212 jobs in Sligo.

The formation of the ATU creates university campuses in counties Sligo, Donegal and Mayo for the first time while giving Galway city a second university option.

ATU will be one of the largest multi-campus universities in Ireland with over 20,000 students at eight campuses.



The Sligo. Brand

Sligo County Council in collaboration with the Sligo Economic Forum launched the vibrant Sligo. brand in October 2019.

This brand identity for Sligo reflects the strengths and vision of the county and promotes the concept of collaboration that supports Sligo as a world class place in which to live, invest and visit. These three brand pillars are reflected in the brand and tagline, Sligo: Live Invest Visit.

Sligo: Live Invest Visit was developed as a unique umbrella brand that helps deliver a positive message for Sligo. This gives organisations, community groups and the people of Sligo a central brand under which all of the positive Sligo stories can be celebrated and promoted.

Under the 3 pillars of Live/Invest/Visit, the brand presents an opportunity for Sligo to promote a positive image which will entice visitors and investors to the area to enjoy the Sligo landscape, culture, educational and innovative opportunities, with excellent choice and quality of life.

Story of the Sligo Brand

Sligo has a visual system, a visual identity that organises and simplifies communication with the citizens, bringing together all stakeholders.

The colours of the brand are representative of the three pillars, Live/Invest/Visit. The greens promote **LIVE**, the blues promote **INVEST** and the reds promote **VISIT**.

A significance is placed on the letter “O” in Sligo. The “O” represents Optimism, Opportunity, Openness and Unity. The “O” has many visual meanings, the circle represents a central point, a coming together of many items into one place.



The graphical treatment and layered shape in the O is representative of a shell, which Sligo is named after in Irish (Sligeach).

For further information on the background to the Sligo. brand visit: sligo.ie/our-brand-our-story.

Sligo.

Main Sligo. brand logo

Sligo. LIVE GREEN
INVEST SMART
VISIT SUSTAINABLY

Brand logo with updated taglines

As part of the development of the new Sligo 2030 strategy, the Sligo. brand has updated its taglines to promote Sligo as the ideal location to encourage living green, investing smart and visiting sustainably.

Sligo.ie

Sligo.ie website logo

The Sligo.ie website was created to act as a central portal for the brand and as a home for some of the positive news and information stories that support Sligo.

Recent Sligo. Brand Developments

During the first half of 2022 a renewed promotional campaign to support the **Sligo: Live Invest Visit** brand has been rolled out.

The first in a suite of three new promotional videos promoting Sligo as a place to Live Green, Invest Smart and Visit Sustainably was released online on 4th February 2022.

The video, titled "**Sligo – so much more than a beautiful place**" focuses on the aspects of modern life in County Sligo and depicts the benefits of living in Sligo; its work-life balance, quality of life, unspoiled landscape, affordability and accessibility.

The video has received extremely positive feedback and has been viewed over 50,000 times to date on

the Sligo.ie and partner channels.

A new suite of digital content promoting Sligo as a world class place to live, invest and visit was unveiled at Ireland West Airport, Knock. This content includes videos and imagery of Sligo that forms part of the wider **Sligo: Live Invest Visit** branding initiative.

The content will be displayed on the modern digital display screens located around the airport. The use of digital displays at the airport allows the brand to showcase Sligo in a unique and flexible way that helps to give positive coverage of the County to a wider Irish and international audience.

To keep updated with the Sligo brand developments and news, visit Sligo.ie



Scene from "**Sligo - so much more than a beautiful place**" online video



**Sligo: Live Invest Visit
Calendar 2022**

*Unique Sligo. branded calendar
produced for 2022*



**Launch of Sligo. brand digital
content at IWAK**

*Suite of digital content promoting
Sligo at Ireland West Airport Knock*



Sligo. Billboard

*On Pearse Road route into
Sligo Town*



**Sligo. Brand Sign at the
Showgrounds**

*Pictured at Sligo Rovers
versus Finn Harps 14th March*

– Photo credit LOI TV

A roundup of Diaspora related interest items...

County Sligo Heritage and Genealogy Centre



The County Sligo Heritage and Genealogy Centre provides a broad range of genealogy research services to people based both overseas and locally, that are interested in tracing their roots in County Sligo. CSHGC is the officially designated Genealogy Research Centre for County Sligo as designated by the Irish Family History Foundation (IFHF), with its office based at Temple Street, Sligo.

Adrian Regan, Manager of the County Sligo Heritage and Genealogy Centre says that... *"our Centre provides comprehensive services to the large numbers of national and international visitors, who come to Sligo each year to carry out genealogical research in the locality of their ancestors and to explore the place they once lived. Frequently, a visit to our centre is an integral focal point of their journey"*.

People contacting the County Sligo Heritage and Genealogy Society come from all over the world to explore their ancestral links with Sligo.

Adrian explains, "generally speaking, each year about 41% of our clients come from the USA & Canada, 9% from Australia, New Zealand & South Africa, 24% from England, Scotland & Wales, and the remaining 26% from the island of Ireland".

The services provided by CSHGC are also used extensively by local people, community groups, local historians, and students.

Sligo Abroad Facebook Group

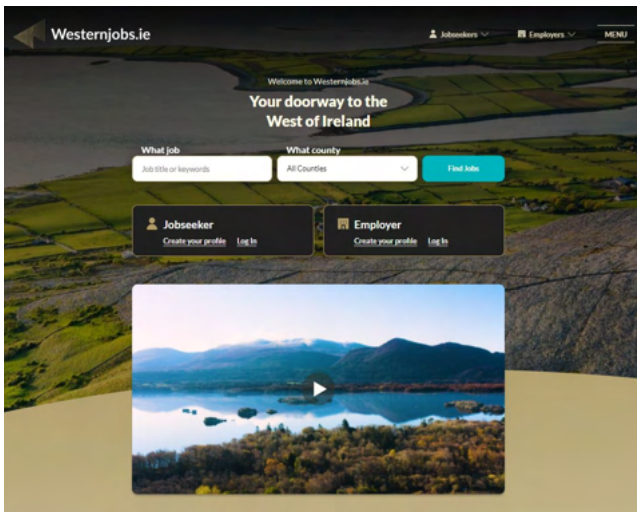
In August 2021, Sligo native Mike Hannon set up a Sligo Abroad Facebook page and since then the page has attracted over 1,000 members from across the globe.

The group helps Sligo people from around the world to connect with friends at home and abroad and to fly the Sligo flag wherever they now call home!

Mike says that the group is a place for discussion for peoples journeys and their links with Sligo.



Westernjobs.ie



Westernjobs.ie was set up in 2021 to showcase the varied and unique career opportunities in the West of Ireland.

The website allows jobseekers to keep up to date on career opportunities and get matched with companies and jobs in the West of Ireland.

The Westernjobs.ie website helps to encourage people to move to the West of Ireland and will provide those interested with information that will help them with their decision.

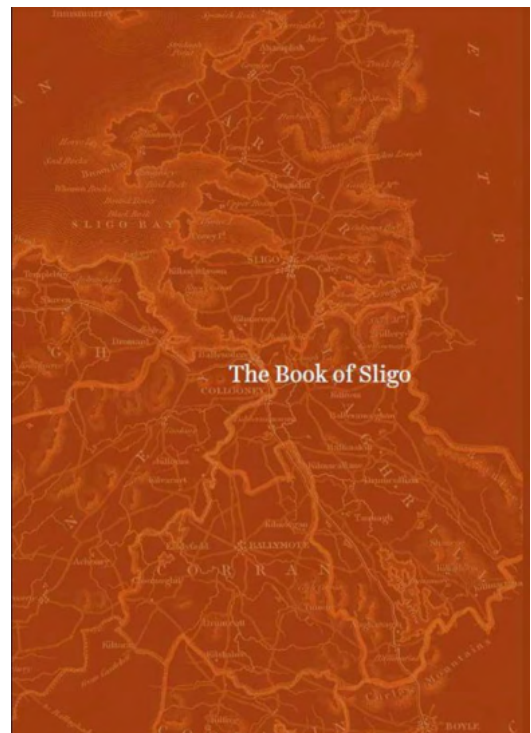
Westernjobs.ie is an initiative of the Western Development Commission, a regional development organisation with a remit to support communities to grow, invest in businesses to scale and planning for the future of the western region.

WesternJobs.ie will showcase career opportunities in Sligo, Donegal, Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo, Galway, Kerry, Clare and Limerick.

The Book of Sligo

The Book of Sligo is a unique county-wide community based arts initiative that involved a team of volunteers hand delivering the beautifully designed book to each household in County Sligo.

An elegant and beautifully designed publication The Book of Sligo is a completely unique celebration of one county. Each page draws upon ancient Civic Parish structures, to bring the reader an eclectic sampling of Sligo's diverse social, archaeological and ecological heritage from every corner of the county.



Due to the high level of enquiries from Sligo people who are not resident in the county, the Blue Raincoat Theatre Company have now made the book available through its website for the cost of the book plus postage. Visit Blueraincoat.com for more information.

SLIGO SPORTS UPDATE



Sligo U20's Honoured For Connacht Success

2022 Connacht Champions

Sligo County Council hosted a Civic Reception for the Sligo U20 County Football Team in County Hall on 14th June in recognition of the team's historic achievement in winning the 2022 Connacht Championship.



Sligo Rovers Womens Team

First senior Sligo Rovers Womens Team formed

The Sligo Rovers Women's Team are competing in the Women's National League for the first time in 2022. Close to 1,000 spectators were in attendance at their first home game of the season in the Showgrounds in March.



2022 Senior Football Championship

Championship update

Sligo's senior footballers travelled to New York for their opening match of the 2022 Connacht Championship during April securing victory in Gaelic Park.

After exiting the Connacht Championship, Sligo reached the semi-final of the inaugural Tailteann Cup competition. (photo: Mary Finn)



2012: A Sligo Rovers Documentary


Released 27th April

The documentary film produced by Oisín and Michael Moran focuses on the match against St Pats that secured the 2012 league championship for Rovers and features interviews with players and supporters.

The documentary can be viewed on the Sligo Rovers Youtube Channel.

Maud Gonne mural featuring the W. B. Yeats poem "When You Are Old".

Image taken from a scene in the upcoming online video promoting the VISIT pillar of the Sligo. brand.

 Cois Ce
QUAYSIDE

*When you are old and grey and full of sleep,
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;
How many loved your moments of glad grace,
And loved your beauty with love false or true,
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face;
And bending down beside the glowing bars,
Murmurs, a little sadly, how love fled
And paced upon the mountains overhead
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.* W. B. Yeats

Sligo. DIASPORA

This is a Sligo County Council initiative in conjunction with the Sligo Economic Forum to promote Sligo as a world class place to Live, Invest and Visit.

If you have any suggested topics or ideas in relation to the newsletter please contact:
diaspora@sligococo.ie

www.sligo.ie