BEALTAINE SLIGO 2026

Sligo
County Council
Arts Service

BEALTAINE FESTIVAL AT A GLANCE

DATE	EVENT	TYPE	TIME	VENUE
Sun 3 May	Bealtaine Dawn Chorus – Sligo Orpheus Choir	Music	8am	Queen Maeve Square
Mon 4 May	Conscious Dance with – Dr. Éadaoin Ní Challaráin	Dance	4pm	Kindred Studio
Tue 5 May	Gallery Tour & Watercolour Workshop	Workshop	11am	The Model
Wed 6 May	Lunchtime @ the Well – Hugh Joseph Feely	Music	1.10pm	Hawk's Well Theatre
Wed 6 May	Open Studios – Kate Mc Donagh, Andy Parsons, Jo Conway	Tour	2pm	The Model
Thu 7 May	Lunchtime Exhibition Tour: *Polyrhythms*	Tour	1.15pm	The Model
Thu 7 May	Good Evening & Good Night Sligo	Various	6pm onwards	Sligo Town
Thurs 7 May	Lanterns in the Making – Tom Meskell	Workshop	7pm	Sligo Tourist Office
Fri 8 May	Ciorcal Comhrá / Conversational Irish	Workshop	12.30pm	Sligo Library
Fri 8 May	Trad Music Slow Session	Music	7pm	No. 45, High St
Sat 9 May	Artist Talk: Tinka Bechert	Talk	11am	The Model
Mon 11 May	Tunes & Songs on a May Afternoon	Music	2pm	Coleman Centre, Gurteen
Tue 12 May	Lunchtime @ the Well – Muller & Munnelly	Music	1.10pm	Hawk's Well Theatre
Wed 13 May	Five Ways to a Healthier You	Talk	12.30pm	Sligo Library
Wed 13 May	Fifty, Fit & Flourishing	Talk	3pm	Tubbercurry Library
Thu 14 May	Sketching in the Gallery - Lorna Kavanagh	Workshop	5.30pm	The Model
Fri 15 May	Creative Writing Workshop - Maeve Mc Kenna	Workshop	11am	City Hall, Sligo
Fri 15 May	How Media Works	Talk	12.30pm	Sligo Library
Fri 15 May	Trad Music Slow Session	Music	7pm	No. 45, High St
Sat 16 May	Won't Be Told – Tumble Circus	Theatre	1pm	Hawk's Well Theatre
Tue 19 May	Cyanotype Workshop – Calico Cloak Project	Workshop	11am	Yeats Building
Wed 20 May	Bealtaine Art Group Exhibition	Exhibition	1pm	Yeats Building
Wed 20 May	Exploring Ireland's Bats	Talk	12.30pm	Sligo Library
Wed 20 May	Lunchtime @ the Well – Pádraic Collins & Catherine Fagan	Music	1.10pm	Hawk's Well Theatre
Wed 20 May	Artist Event: Organising & Documenting Your Work	Workshop (Online)	11.30am	Online
Thu 21 May	Gallery Tour & Felt Workshop	Workshop	11am	Hyde Bridge Gallery
Thu 21 May	Lunchtime Exhibition Tour: *Polyrhythms*	Tour	1.15pm	The Model
Thu 21 May	Sligo library Open Day & Help Session	Workshop	10am	Sligo Library
Thu 21 May	Brown Bread, Butter & Stories	Workshop	1pm	Yeats Building

Fri 22 May	Creative Writing: These Hands	Workshop	11am	City Hall, Sligo
Fri 22 May	Songs at Twilight	Music	7pm	Oak Moon, Yeats Building
Fri 22 May	Trad Music Slow Session	Music	7pm	No. 45, High St
Sat 23 May	Tassels & Threads Textile Workshop	Workshop	10am	Yeats Building
Tue 26 May	Aspiring Authors Over 60	Reading	2pm	Sligo Library
Wed 27 May	Lunchtime @ the Well – Earl Okin	Music	1.10pm	Hawk's Well
Wed 27 May	Poetry Workshop Terry McDonagh	Workshop	12.30pm	Ballymote Library
Wed 27 May	A Night in November	Theatre	8pm	Hawk's Well
Thu 28 May	Sketching in the Gallery	Workshop	5.30pm	The Model
Fri 29 May	Dracula's Sligo:	Theatre	1pm	Hawk's Well
Fri 29 May	Poetry Workshop: Terry McDonagh	Workshop	12.30pm	Sligo Library
Fri 29 May	Trad Music Slow Session	Music	7pm	No. 45, High St

ONGOING & THROUGHOUT MAY

EVENT	TYPE	DATES	VENUE
Polyrhythms – Tinka Bechert	Exhibition	Throughout May	The Model
Jack B. Yeats Exhibitions	Exhibition	Throughout May	The Model
Folk/Lure Residency Programme	Arts + Health	April–May	Collooney & Easkey
Life is for Drumming	Arts + Health	Throughout May	Copper Beech
Memories Old & Memories New	Arts + Health	Throughout May	Care Homes
Medium Rare	Theatre	Throughout May	Community Hospital Setting
Digital Skills Workshop	Workshops	From Thu 7 May	Sligo Library
Kirchen Crafting Workshops	Workshops	From Thu 7 May	Sligo Library

PERFORMANCE PROGRAMME

Bealtaine Dawn Chorus
Sligo Orpheus Choir

BEALTAINE NATIONAL EVENT

Experience the magic of the Bealtaine Dawn Chorus in Sligo this year in Queen Maeve Square with a short performance from Sligo Orpheus Choir, whose rich harmonies will create a unique and uplifting start to the 2026 Bealtaine festival.

All Welcome. No Booking Required.

Date:	**Sunday 3rd May**	**8am**
Location:	**Queen Maeve Square**	**Free**

Tunes & Songs on a May Afternoon

John Dwyer, Michael Hurley and Maureen O'Dowd invite you to join them for a lively afternoon of music as part of this year's Bealtaine festival in the heart of Gurteen.

Pre-booking advisable on 071 918 2599.

Date:	**Monday 11th May**	**2pm**
Location:	**Coleman Centre Gurteen**	**Free**

Won't be Told
Tumble Circus

BEALTAINE NATIONAL EVENT

A bold, rebellious circus bursting with acrobatics, juggling, and anarchic comedy, full of heart, attitude, and defiance.

Presented in association with Age & Opportunity as part of the Bealtaine Festival. Pre-book via the Hawk's Well.

Date:	**Saturday 16th May**	**1pm**
Location:	**The Hawk's Well Theatre**	**Free**

A Night in November

Opening Night Bealtaine Ticket Offer

Kenneth McCallister's life is upended after witnessing sectarian hatred at a football match. A funny and moving journey exploring identity, prejudice, and personal transformation.

Discounted ticket of €5 on the opening night for over 50's. Show continues until May 30th. Pre-book via the Hawk's Well.

Date:	**Wednesday 27th May**	**8pm**
Location:	**The Hawk's Well Theatre**	**€5 Over 50's**

Dracula's Sligo:
A Horrible History of 1832

Bram Stoker's mother, Sligo native Charlotte Thornley, survived the cholera epidemic of 1832. Her chilling stories of lockdown, strange deaths, and the "undead" inspired the famous vampire. Now, Hawk's Well's Cultural Companions revive Sligo's darkest hour in this comedic *Horrible Histories*-style show full of local lore and morbid humour.

Pre-book via the Hawk's Well.

Date:	**Friday 29th May**	**1pm**
Location:	**The Hawk's Well Theatre Studio**	**Free**

Songs at Twilight
with Paul Murray & Hugh MacConville

Join Paul & Hugh in the Oak Moon garden for a session of old-time ballads & music hall singing.

Date:	**Friday 22nd May**	**7pm – 8pm**
Location:	**Oak Moon @ The Yeats Building**	**Free**

Lunchtime @ the Well

Free weekly lunchtime bite-sized music gigs at the Hawk's Well – pre-book at **www.hawkswell.com**

Wednesday 6th May	**HUGH JOSEPH FEELY**
Tuesday 12th May	**MULLER & MUNNELLY**
Wednesday 20th May	**PÁDRAIC COLLINS & CATHERINE FAGAN**
Wednesday 27th May	**EARL OKIN**

Dates:	**6/12/20/27 May**	**1.10pm**
Location:	**The Hawk's Well Theatre**	**Free**

Tumble Circus

EXHIBITIONS PROGRAMME

Polyrhythms
Tinka Bechert

German-Irish painter Tinka Bechert's show brings together painting, sculpture and textile works made since 2018. The exhibition centres on a decisive shift in Bechert's practice away from narrative imagery toward abstraction. Accompanying this development has been an increased attention to musical thinking, with rhythm, repetition and pacing guiding how the works unfold.

Date: Throughout May
Location: The Model FREE

The Living Ginger & A Painted Universe
Jack Butler Yeats

During the month of May, The Model has two Jack Butler Yeats exhibitions to visit. One of Ireland's most celebrated artists, Yeats' paintings are full of energy, emotion, and imagination. Through scenes of sailors, performers, and solitary figures and moving from early works to powerful later paintings these two exhibitions explore themes of memory, inner life, and everyday experience.

Date: Throughout May
Location: The Model FREE

The Bealtaine Art Group

Active Retirement groups in Collooney and Ballymote will exhibit their work as part of a special Bealtaine exhibition.

Date: Wednesday 20th May 1pm
Location: Exhibition Room @ Yeats Building

Bealtaine Open Studio Event

Model studio artists Kate McDonagh, Andy Parsons and Jo Conway will open their studios to the public, offering a rare behind-the-scenes insight into their creative processes. This is a drop-in event, so no pre-booking is necessary.

Kate McDonagh is an abstract artist exploring contrasts of light and dark, stillness and movement. Influenced by time spent in Japan, her practice centres on water-based woodblock printing (Mokuhanga) and watercolour, with carved blocks evolving into sculptural works.

Andy Parsons is a visual artist whose practice combines working in community contexts with making drawing, sculpture and painting. Andy is located in the Yard Studios, (outside of the main Model building next to the Mason's Hall).

Jo Conway is a visual artist with a background in theatre design, combines drawing, collage, textiles and mapping to explore family, chaos and human experience, inspired by ancient Egyptian and early Romanesque art.

Date: Wednesday 6th May 2pm – 4pm
Location: The Model Studios FREE

TAKE PART PROGRAMME

The Living Wheel: Seasonal Conscious Dance with Dr. Éadaoin Ní Challaráin

Conscious dance is a powerful way to experience both personal and collective connection through world music, movement, and the wisdom of the moving body. It invites you not only to deepen your relationship with yourself and others, but also to come to know how that connection ripples outward into the wider world you inhabit. No previous dance experience necessary.

Limited capacity, pre-book here: https://tinyurl.com/3x7hsjxh

Date:	**Monday 4th May**	**4pm – 6pm**
Location:	**Kindred Studios Strandhill Golf Club**	**Pre-book >>**

Gallery Tour & Watercolour Workshop Inspired by Jack Butler Yeats – The Living Ginger

This guided tour of the Jack B. Yeats exhibition "The Living Ginger", looking closely at Yeats' characters and explores how memory, imagination and everyday life shaped his art. The tour is followed by a watercolour workshop using simple materials.

No experience needed. All materials provided.

Limited capacity, pre-book via The Model on 071 91 41405.

Date:	**Tuesday 5th May**	**11am – 12.30pm**
Location:	**The Model**	**Free**

Lunchtime Exhibition Tour "Polyrhythms"

Enjoy a lunchtime tour of Tinka Bechert's show. Limited free spaces on the tour will be offered as part of the Model's Bealtaine programme.

Further information: 071 91 41405.

Date:	**Thursday 7th & 21st May**	**1.15pm**
Location:	**The Model**	**Pre-book**

Sketching in the Gallery

An easy-going friendly and accessible evening of sketching the exhibitions. Materials provided. Limited free spaces will be offered as part of the Model's Bealtaine programme.

Further information: 071 91 41405

Date:	**Thursday 14th & 28th May**	**5.30pm – 7.30pm**
Location:	**The Model**	**Pre-book**

Good Evening & Good Night Sligo

From live music and arts events to food and wellbeing, Sligo NTE Pilot will be showcasing the diverse experiences Sligo has to offer throughout the town, so pop into town and enjoy all Sligo has to offer.

Further information: https://www.sligobid.ie

Date:	**Thursday 7th May**	**6pm onwards**
Location:	**Sligo town**	**Free**

Lanterns in the Making
with Tom Meskell

Tom Meskell is a visual artist who works in the field of spectacle and participatory arts. He is renowned for his large-scale site-specific installations developed by local communities. As part of this year's Bealtaine festival, Tom will host drop-in lantern making workshops for older people and work with children and grandparents from Mercy Primary School to create paper lanterns that will become part of a Sligo BID/Tidy Towns Culture Night Sligo 2026 project.

Supported by Creative Ireland.

Date:	**Thursday 7th May**	**4pm - 7pm**
Location:	**Sligo Tourist Office (O'Connell St)**	**FREE**

Artist Talk: Tinka Bechert in conversation with Patrick Murphy

Polyrhythms is a solo exhibition by Tinka Bechert exploring a shift from narrative to abstraction across painting, sculpture, and textiles. Inspired by rhythm and repetition, the works unfold through patterns of movement and pause. You are invited to join Tinka, who will be in conversation with Patrick Murphy as part of the show.

Date:	**Saturday 9th May**	**11am - 12.30pm**
Location:	**The Model**	**Free**

Image: Tinka Bechert; *Polyrhythms*. Installation view, The Model, 2026. Photos by Cían Flynn.

Creative Writing
with Maeve McKenna

Writer Maeve McKenna will host two welcoming creative writing workshops for older people. *"A Letter to My Younger Self"* invites participants to reflect on their 21-year-old selves, while *"These Hands"* explores the life stories carried in our hands. Using gentle prompts, sample texts, and creative exercises, participants will draw on personal memories and life experience in a relaxed, supportive setting.

No writing experience is needed.
Workshops aimed at over 50's, pre-booking essential: arts@sligococo.ie limited capacity.

LETTER TO MY YOUNGER SELF

Date:	**Friday 15th May**	**11am**
Location:	**City Hall Sligo**	**Free / Pre-Book**

THESE HANDS WORKSHOP

Date:	**Friday 22th May**	**11am**
Location:	**City Hall Sligo**	**Free / Pre-Book**

Trad Music Slow Sessions
with Mossie Martin & Sean Carroll

Mossie & Sean will be leading slow sessions for trad musicians this May. These relaxed and informal gatherings are designed for learners and musicians to play traditional music at a slower pace. Suitable for players who maybe haven't picked up an instrument in a couple of years or who have just begun playing. Mossie and Sean will host on alternative evenings, guiding & encouraging players.

All welcome at Number 45, Sligo Centre for Independent living on High Street, F91 WC79. Kindly supported by Sligo Town NTE Pilot.

Date:	**May Friday 8/15/22/29**	**7 - 8pm**
Location:	**Number 45**	**FREE**

Calico Cloak Project: Cyanotype Workshop
with Lucy Goodier

The Calico Cloak Project invites you to take part in a Cyanotype May Flower Printing Session with artist Lucy Goodier. Experiment with the cyanotype process and help create May flower prints. Contribute your own stitch to the PeacePlus Calico Cloak.

No booking required. Drop in, take a seat, and join the making circle.

Date:	**Tuesday 19 May**	**11am - 1pm**
Location:	**The Yeats Building**	**FREE**

Gallery Tour & Workshop
with Vivienne Byrne

Hosted in collaboration with the Hyde Bridge Gallery, enjoy a guided tour of Linda McCann's solo exhibition, followed by a hands-on felt-making workshop with artist Vivienne Byrne.

All welcome, no charge.

Date:	**Thursday 21st May**	**11am - 1pm**
Location:	**Hyde Bridge Gallery @ Yeats Building**	**FREE**

Brown Bread, Butter & Stories

Enjoy an afternoon of brown bread making, butter churning, recipe sharing, tea, conversation and a reading by Maura Gilligan from her book "The Tide is Coming". Ingredients provided.

Date:	**Thursday 21st May**	**1pm - 3pm**
Location:	**The Yeats Building**	**€5 (materials cost)**

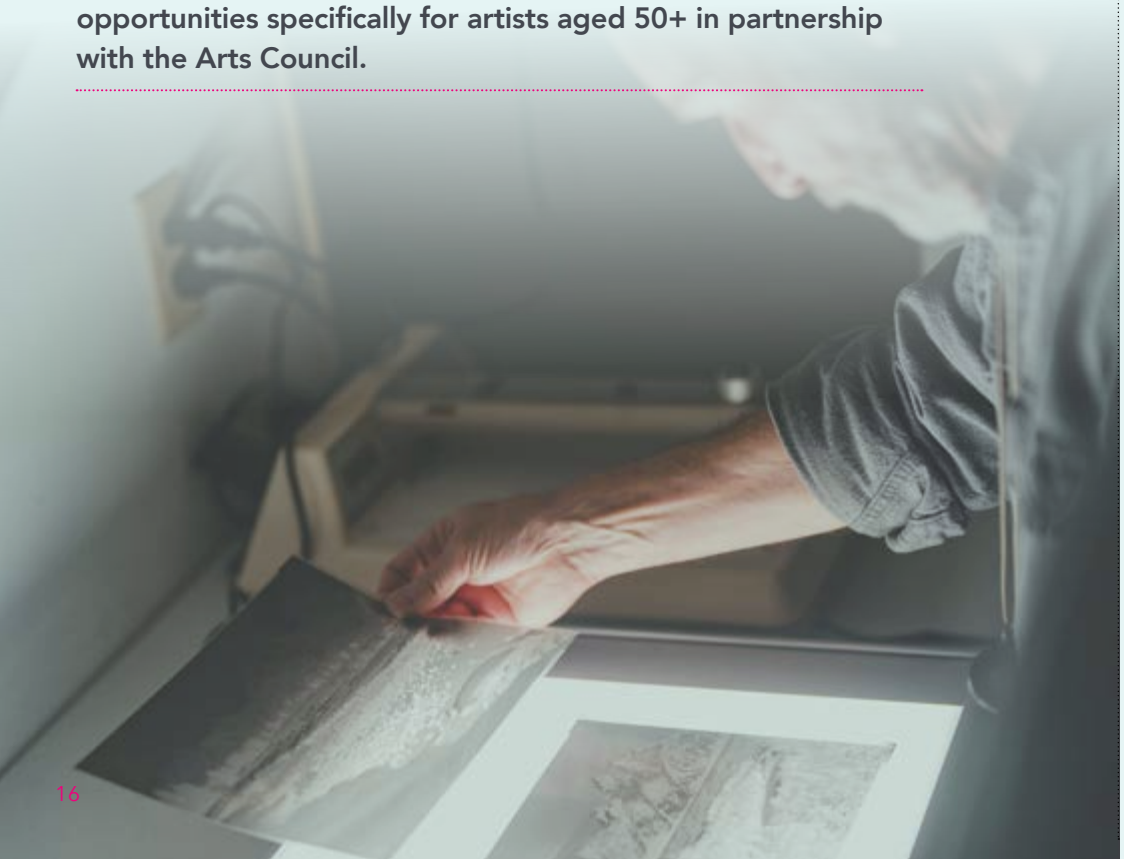
Tassels & Threads Textile Workshop
with Caroline Walshe

Learn new skills at this textile workshop with artist Caroline Walshe.

Date:	**Saturday 23rd May**	**10am - 1pm**
Location:	**The Yeats Building**	**FREE**

BEALTAINE ARTIST FOCUSED OPPORTUNITIES

Sligo Arts Service is committed to developing its programme of supports for artists and creatives who live in Sligo. Through targeted supports, we aim to provide artists with time, space, skills, and resources to sustain and deepen their creative practice at every stage of their career.
To co-incide with this year's Bealtaine Festival, we are delighted to announce two new professional development opportunities specifically for artists aged 50+ in partnership with the Arts Council.



Tyrone Guthrie Centre Residency Bealtaine Open Call

Sligo Arts Service will offer a week-long residency at the Tyrone Guthrie Centre to a full-time, professional practicing Sligo artist, working in any discipline aged 50+. The renowned County Monaghan rural retreat offers uninterrupted time and space for professional artists to research and create. It supports practitioners with accommodation, a creative community environment and a peaceful setting in which to work.
Application window: 1st to 15th May 2026.
Application Information: www.sligoarts.ie

Organising & Documenting your Work with Kari Cahill

An online workshop for full-time professional artists aged 50+, introducing a clear, repeatable system for documenting, organising, archiving, and contextualising your work. Learn how strong documentation supports presentation and sharing, how smart organisation saves time and reduces stress, and how a well-kept archive strengthens applications and reflection. You'll also explore how concise, adaptable context adds depth to your work and helps different audiences understand it.
Space is limited to just 20 participants & must be pre-booked via: arts@sligococo.ie

Date:	**Wednesday 20th May**	**11.30am - 2pm**
Online:	**FREE / Pre-Book**	

ARTS + HEALTH PROGRAMME

Sligo Arts Service's Arts + Health programme is focussed on service users, residents, staff and family in both day and residential care settings throughout County Sligo. It is funded by Sligo County Council and The Arts Council of Ireland.

Please note the activities listed below are NOT open to the general public.

Folk:Lure Residency Programme

Artists Miriam Needham & Medbh Gillard are Sligo Arts Services artists in residence in Daycare facilities as part of "Folk:Lure" Arts + Health initiative. Throughout the months of April & May, the artists are working at centres in both Collooney and Easkey with service users. Miriam Needham's residency involves storytelling and creative writing, while visual artist Medbh Gillard is exploring themes of memory and place with the participants.

Life is for Drumming
with Maria Ward

Artist Maria Ward will lead chair-based drumming sessions for service users at Copper Beech in Cloonamahon. Using weighted drumsticks, participants will be encouraged to follow simple rhythmic movements to pre-recorded music, focusing on striking the beat rather than playing instruments. The sessions are designed to be fun, inclusive, and celebrate a shared lust for life, with music chosen to match the group's preferences.

Memories Old & Memories New
with David Lawless & Margaret Byrne

Relaxed music and singing sessions designed for care home residents. Using harp, guitar, whistles, voice and percussion, David and Margaret's sessions will include gentle movement and simple percussive elements. Familiar ballads and traditional songs will be used to encourage reminiscence, connection and shared enjoyment.

Medium Rare
with Orla McSharry & Niamh McGrath

Two new faces take over the world-famous psychic gig for the residents staff in a local care setting. The problem? They're not supposed to because they're as clairvoyant as a packet of crisps. Reading the future on tea leaves? Might as well do it in a teabag, less to clean afterwards. A session of spiritual enlightenment, a bit of nonsense, snack-based visions, and theatrical incompetence. The spirits might not be amused, but you will be! A Hawk's Well Theatre production, created by Artist in Residence, Niamh McGrath.

BEALTAINE @ THE LIBRARIES

All library events are free, though some do need to be pre-booked.

Digital Skills Workshops with MSLETB

Learning Basic phone and internet skills. Six week course – ongoing.

Booking required: 071 911 675 or email sligolib@sligococo.ie

Date:	**Thursday 7th May onwards**	**2pm - 4pm**
Location:	**Sligo Library**	**Pre-Book**

Kitchen Crafting

Bring your knitting, painting, sewing, or any craft you're working on — or come along to try something new.

Booking required: 071 911 675 or email sligolib@sligococo.ie

Date:	**Thursday 7th – 28th May**	**10.30am - 12.30pm**
Location:	**Sligo Library**	**Pre-Book**

Ciorcal Comhrá/ Conversational Irish

Bígí linn le haghaidh ciorcal comhrá a bheidh ar siúl i Leabharlann Shligigh. Join us for an Irish language conversation circle taking place in Sligo Library.

Booking required: 071 911 675 or email sligolib@sligococo.ie

Date:	**Friday 8th & 22nd May**	**12.30pm - 1.30pm**
Location:	**Sligo Library**	

Five Ways to a Healthier You with Ailis Brosnan

Wellness workshop and talk with Ailis Brosnan.

A Healthy Ireland at your Library event.

Booking required: 071 911 675 or email sligolib@sligococo.ie

Date:	**Wednesday 13th May**	**12.30pm**
Location:	**Sligo Library**	**Pre-Book**

Fifty, Fit & Flourishing with Ailis Brosnan

An inspiring, practical talk empowering women 50+ to thrive through purposeful exercise, nourishing food, and a joyful mindset—feel stronger, energised, and excited for what's next.

Date:	**Wednesday 13th May**	**3pm**
Location:	**Tubbercurry Community Library**	

How Media Works with Aoife Barry

How media and social media algorithms work, how to spot AI content, and tips to avoid online scams.

Booking required: 071 911 6750 | sligolib@sligococo.ie

Date:	**Friday 15th May**	**12.30pm**
Location:	**Sligo Library**	**Pre-Book**

Exploring Ireland's Bats

A talk on bats with Mary Roberts of Bat Conservation Ireland.

Booking required: 071 911 675 or email sligolib@sligococo.ie

Date:	**Wednesday 20th May**	**12.30pm**
Location:	**Sligo Library**	**Pre-Book**

Hits & Misses of Aspiring Authors Over 60

Readings, anecdotes and conversation with two regional writers who launched their literary careers at age 60+.

Booking required: 071 911 675 or email sligolib@sligococo.ie

Date:	**Tuesday 26th May**	**2pm**
Location:	**Sligo Library**	**Pre-Book**

Poetry Workshops
with Terry McDonagh

Poetry Ireland workshop with Terry McDonagh.

Booking required: 071 911 675 or email sligolib@sligococo.ie

Date:	**Wednesday 27th May**	**12.30pm**
Location:	**Ballymote Library**	**Pre-Book**
Date:	**Friday 29th May**	**12.30pm**
Location:	**Sligo Library**	**Pre-Book**

Sligo Library Open Day & Help Session with Age Friendly

Learn about the services your library offers and get one-to-one help with BorrowBox, reserving titles, and more.

Date:	**Thursday 21st of May**	**10am – 12noon**
Location:	**Sligo Library**	

arts council chomhairle ealaíon
Sligo County Council Arts Service
Sligo.
Age Friendly SLIGO
Age & Opportunity
Bealtaine Festival
Celebrating the arts and creativity as we age

BEALTAINE
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