



# WESTSIDE NEWSLETTER



Galway City Partnership  
Comhpháirtíocht Chathair na Galílimhe

a tide for change  
an taise ag caoin

Supported by Westside Resource Centre and Galway City Partnership - Westside Project

Volume 5, Issue 3

Autumn 2015



## Around Ireland by Sea Kayak



By Ruairi Leddy, Youth Justice Worker, MEAS Garda Youth Diversion Project, Westside

The famous quote that "no great adventure ever started with someone eating a salad" certainly relates to how we came to circumnavigate the Emerald Isle by sea kayak. We (that is, myself - Ruairi Leddy - and my good mate - Pearse O'Toole) were sitting in a bar in Iceland having spent three weeks in the wilds of that beautiful country. The jam jars of Icelandic beer were going down all too easily when we began discussing the concept. Not having a proper notion of how physically demanding and logistically difficult such an expedition would be and with logic well and truly gone out the door at this stage, we shook hands, agreeing to give it a whirl.

We spent the few weeks in the run-up to our departure frantically running around buying equipment. It was truly amazing the amount of equipment needed for such an



expedition and even more amazing that we managed to fit it all into our kayaks. Some of the safety equipment such as GPSs, VHF radios, and flares put a real dent in our finances but we considered it money well spent in case we ever had to use it.

The concept of doing the circumnavigation for charity was a hotly-debated topic between us before departure. I personally was very apprehensive, as it put us under a lot of pressure to complete the trip. Pearse won the argument and, with hindsight, it certainly added to the sense of achievement. Raising much-needed funds and creating more awareness for a worthy charity like Console was a great added bonus. Console is Ireland's national suicide charity. They aim to meet the needs of those who come to them for support, be it advice, guidance information or counselling.

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### Classes and Courses in

#### Westside Resource Centre

An increasing range of educational providers are opting to use Westside Resource Centre as their venue of choice in the Westside area. Classes and courses are available on topics ranging from creative skills such as writing, painting and music to more practical skills such as wellness and computers. The classes cater for adults of all ages and walks of life. Westside Resource Centre is situated in the heart of Westside and is an integral part of the community. The building is fully wheelchair accessible and offers comfortable, modern spaces for learning and creativity.

More information on classes and courses is available on the resource centre's website: [www.westsideresourcecentre.ie](http://www.westsideresourcecentre.ie) and from reception. Phone 091-528325 or email [info@westsideresourcecentre.ie](mailto:info@westsideresourcecentre.ie)

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#### Visit Us Online

[www.westsideresourcecentre.ie](http://www.westsideresourcecentre.ie)

[www.facebook.com/westsideresourcecentre](https://www.facebook.com/westsideresourcecentre)

### Westside Community Organic Garden

The summer proved less than wonderful weather-wise, but the volunteers in the garden managed to grow a wide variety of produce. The old reliables - potatoes and cabbage - did well, as did the fruit trees and bushes.

The garden is completely volunteer-run and new members are always welcome. Those who join are asked to attend one of the beginners gardening courses that are run throughout the year.

For more information contact 091-528325



Garden volunteers bringing in the harvest.

### Gorta-Self Help Africa CHARITY DINNER

Gorta-Self Help Africa's third annual Charity Dinner takes place this year on 27 November in the Galway Bay Hotel, Salthill. The night kicks off with a champagne reception at 7:30pm followed by a four-course meal with lots of entertainment and prizes. Music by Sean Slattery and The Connections. Dress: Smart Casual

Tickets cost €70 and all proceeds go towards supporting the charity's essential work in many African countries.

For more information  
and tickets, contact  
Ronan Scully on  
087-6189094

**gorta**  
Self Help Africa

### Social Inclusion Week Galway 2015

Social Inclusion Week takes place this year from 19 to 25 October. Full details of events being held in Westside and throughout the city are available on Galway City Council's website: [www.galwaycity.ie](http://www.galwaycity.ie)

## EPIC - Empowering Young People in Care in Ireland



**NATIONAL CARE LEAVERS DAY**  
**OCTOBER 8TH 2015**  
**FARMLEIGH PHOENIX PARK**  
**PROFESSIONALS €50.00 STUDENTS €25.00**  
**YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE 16+ AND CARE LEAVERS FREE**  
FOR BOOKINGS PLEASE VISIT [WWW.EVENTBRITE.IE](http://WWW.EVENTBRITE.IE) OR CALL EPIC ON (01) 872 7661



EPIC have been very busy the last few months getting out and about meeting lots of young people and all the local services and hopefully we'll get to meet many more of you in the near future.

We have also been busy preparing for our National Care Leavers Conference titled 'Care Leavers Care About Your Health' which will take place in Farmleigh, Dublin on the 8th October. This conference is for Care Leavers, Carers and professionals

and more details can be found on our EPIC website [www.epiconline.ie](http://www.epiconline.ie)

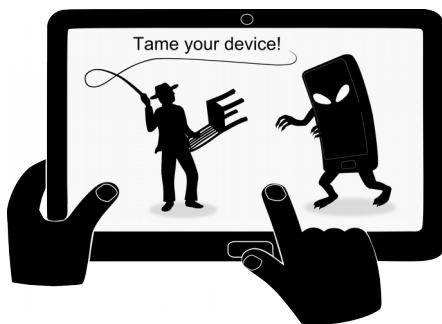
We recently gave a presentation at an international conference and workshop on After-care and Advocacy in Berlin and brought a care leaver from the West to co-present which was very exciting for our young person as it was her first time out of Ireland. Hopefully we'll have more opportunities for young people to participate in such events in the future.

Westside Resource Centre provides photocopying, faxing and laminating services to members of the public.

Westside Resource Centre, Seamus Quirke Road, Galway. 091-528325

[info@westsideresourcecentre.ie](mailto:info@westsideresourcecentre.ie) [www.westsideresourcecentre.ie](http://www.westsideresourcecentre.ie)

## Beginners Smartphones, Tablets and Computers Courses



Do you get frustrated with your device? Do you find it hard to get it to do what you want it to? Westside Resource Centre provides beginners courses catering to the needs of Android and Apple smartphone and tablet users. The courses are run over three weeks; one-and-a-half hours per week, and

cover the basics of how to get the most out of your device. The classes are very informal and your questions are welcome.

Westside Resource Centre's computer room has recently been upgraded and we are offering Beginners and Improvers computer courses. The courses normally run over eight Thursday afternoons and cover all the basics from how to switch on your computer to how to send photos by email and chat on Skype. As part of each class, there is time set aside for your questions on topics not covered in the taught section.

Drop in to Westside Resource Centre to register or call us on 091-528325 for more information.



*Art, Craft and Educational Classes*

*Meetings, Seminars & Social Gatherings*



Your local Resource Centre hosts a wide variety of different functions and courses.

**Westside Resource Centre**  
 091-528325

## Foróige's Big Brother Big Sister Programme Galway

Foróige's Big Brother Big Sister Programme is a mentoring programme matching up a caring adult to a young person aged between 10-18 years.

It involves giving up a couple of hours a week to hang out with and provide support to a young person in the community. The relationship is called a match and the mentor and "Little" are always of the same gender and have shared interests and hobbies.

In Galway we are always looking for people who would enjoy the challenge and benefit from being a "Big"....people who want to make a positive difference to the life of a young person.

To learn more about the programme and what is involved contact us at 091-554420, or check out [www.foroige.ie/bbbs](http://www.foroige.ie/bbbs)

## Westside Arts Festival 2015

The organising committee of the Westside Arts Festival would like to extend a very special thank you to all of those individuals, community groups and local businesses that supported this year's event. The festival could not take place without the support of the local community and we are very grateful for all the help.

Each year, the festival is supported by a team of volunteers and again we would like to offer our most sincere thanks to our wonderful team of volunteers for all their hard work during the festival.

**Go raibh míle maith agaibh.**

DISCLAIMER: The opinions expressed in the contents of this newsletter are those of the author(s) of each piece and do not reflect the view of the Westside Resource Centre or Galway City Partnership - Westside Project.



## Around Ireland by sea kayak – continued from page 1

Pearse and I both wanted to do something for suicide awareness in Ireland. Like most members of the adult population in Ireland, we have been personally touched by this situation. The issue of mental health has been getting more airtime over the past few years and has become a topic of conversation in sitting rooms all over the country. We all need to contribute to positive mental health in our own way and this was our contribution. Having set the fund-raising bar at €5,000, (optimistically, we felt) we hit this amount within three days, so we doubled the target amount to €10,000, which I'm happy to say was also passed. We have been blown away by the generosity of friends, family and strangers alike.

As in life, we encountered highs and lows throughout our adventure: incessant bad weather, angry seas, relentless wind, wet clothes and exhaustion came to define our 1500km expedition around Ireland. On many days the wind made progress extremely difficult or brought us a complete

standstill, forcing us to hole up in a wet tent on some remote island off the coast. During these times we thought we might never finish the trip. On other days, the mist was all we could see for anything up to ten hours, following our compasses. When land would finally come into view it was always an enormous relief. The Irish weather well and truly dictated our sometimes very slow progress.



Fortunately, the highs way outnumbered the lows and we were fortunate to witness some amazing sights such as basking sharks and pods of dolphins up close in their own habitat. In addition to paddling at night under a meteor shower, we landed on some of the remote islands around our coast such as the Great Blasket islands where we ended up staying in Peig Sayers' house. We expected when we embarked on this adventure to encounter some amazing sights but what really made the adventure for me was the hospitality and warmth of the people we met along the way. The Céad Míle Fáilte is alive and well in Ireland. On numerous occasions we had complete strangers invite us into their homes and give us a place to stay and we always left with full bellies.

As we were crossing Galway Bay approaching Spiddal on the final day of our journey and first glimpsed the welcoming bonfire, the band playing and the amount of people gathered on the pier to welcome us, the relief came flooding down. I was totally overwhelmed; I didn't know whether to laugh or cry. I was so happy to be finished and the sense of achievement was massive. That welcome home and that feeling of accomplishing our goal is a memory I will cherish for the rest of my time.

I would like to thank everybody for their support and words of encouragement which helped us through the low points and helped push us home. If you would like to donate to this worthy cause you can log onto [www.kayakforconsole.com](http://www.kayakforconsole.com)

Ruairi Leddy

## Culture Night

Friday 18 September saw another very successful celebration of Culture Night in Westside. Westside Resource Centre hosted a screening of the classic movie "The Sting" followed by a cup of tea in the pop-up "Community Café". The event was very well attended and enjoyed by all.

Culture Night comprises hundreds of events across Ireland and overseas. Arts and cultural organisations open their doors until late with hundreds of free events, tours, talks & performances for you, your family and friends to enjoy.



**Managing Your Child's Epilepsy – Parents Programme** will be held for 4 Tuesdays, beginning Tuesday, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 10.30 am -12.30 pm at the Westside Resource Centre, Seamus Quirke Road, Galway.

**Epilepsy Awareness Evening** for Teachers, SNAs and Pre School Teachers will be held on Tuesday, 13<sup>th</sup> of October 2015 at the Galway Education Centre, Wellpark, Galway beginning at 6.30 pm.

**Women & Epilepsy Day**, Menlo Park Hotel, Galway on Wednesday, October 21<sup>st</sup> 2015 beginning at 9.30 am.

All of the sessions are free to attend but booking is essential by phoning Epilepsy Ireland's Galway office at 091-587640.



**Galway City Partnership**  
Comhpháirtíocht Chathair na Gaillimhe

a tide for change  
an tairde ag casadh

Galway City Partnership Westside Project, in conjunction with Galway Roscommon ETB, is organising a variety of exciting and interesting courses for people in Westside. Courses include Beginners and Intermediate Sewing, Cookery and Healthy Eating, Intermediate Patchwork, Cookery for Men, Computers for Men, Health and Beauty, Gardening, Westside Community Music Group and lots more! The courses take place in Westside Resource Centre.

If you are interested in participating in any of these courses or would like to know more about the work of Galway City Partnership Westside Project please contact Vernice Murray on 091-528325 or 087 9303468 or email [vernice@gcp.ie](mailto:vernice@gcp.ie). We look forward to hearing from you! Everyone is welcome to get involved.



## The Open Door

### Community Social Gathering

First Tuesday of Every Month @ 10:30am

Westside Resource Centre

☆ All Welcome ☆

Set up in mid-2014, The Open Door is a social space where people can drop in for a cup of tea and a chat. The Open Door runs on the first Tuesday of every month and each event includes a short talk on a topic of general interest. To date, speakers have included the local Community Garda, a member of the Galway City Partnership – Westside Project and a HSE representative.

## WESTSIDE MEN'S CLUB 1995 - 2015

Westside Men's Club is in existence for 20 years and is going from strength to strength. In addition to a computer course and a painting course, we took part in Westside Arts Festival and are currently doing a photography course with Liam Carroll.

We are planning an open day later in the year to showcase the work of the Men's Club and the benefits to the members and the community over the years.

## Organisations based at Westside Resource Centre

### Galway City Partnership - Westside Project

Galway City Partnership - Westside Project coordinates and supports community work and participation in the Westside area. The project is actively engaging with numerous individuals, agencies and service providers in the area to ensure the needs of the community are being met and to empower local people for positive change. Activities are supported by Galway & Roscommon ETB, HSE West and Galway City Council. (Contact Vernice on 091-528325 or 087-9303468).

### Community Workers' Cooperative (CWC)

We are the leading national membership organisation that promotes and supports community work to address poverty, social exclusion and inequality. Our work includes developing and influencing policy as it affects communities living in poverty, research, campaigning on issues that affect communities experiencing poverty and inequality and supporting our members in their work for social justice at grassroots and national level. Email [info@cwcc.ie](mailto:info@cwcc.ie) [www.cwcc.ie](http://www.cwcc.ie) Phone: 091-528325 / 087-2998619 / 087-9326467

### Westside Crèche & Pre School

Westside Crèche & Pre School is a community based childcare service which aims to support and assist families and children in the Westside area through the provision of accessible, affordable, high quality childcare. (Contact Pauline on 091-581707).

### OBAIR – Local Employment Service Network

The Local Employment Service Network (LESN) provides a free and confidential service to people who are unemployed and in receipt of a Social Welfare payment. If you are unemployed and in receipt of a Social Welfare payment the LESN staff can assist you with information and guidance to explore your options for work, education or training. We can also provide assistance with CV preparation, application forms and interview preparation. (Contact Mary or Pdraig on 091-581955).



### Gorta Self Help Africa

Gorta Self Help Africa works with rural communities to help them improve their farms and their livelihoods. (Contact Ronan on 087-6189094).

### Big Brother Big Sister

Big Brother Big Sister is an internationally renowned youth mentoring programme that forms friendships between a young person and an adult volunteer. This programme is operated in Ireland by Foróige, the national youth development organisation. The Galway regional office is based in the Westside Resource Centre. (Contact Andrea or Kate on 091-554420).

### MEAS Garda Youth Diversion Project

The GYDP is a community based and supported youth development project which seeks to divert young people from becoming involved (or further involved) in anti-social or criminal behaviour. These projects facilitate personal development and promote civic responsibility. (Contact Ruairi or Anthony on 086-7741623 or 091-554421).

### EPIC – Empowering Young People in Care in Ireland

EPIC is an independent association for young people in care and with care experience. We provide information, advice and support as well as an independent advocacy service for young people in care, aftercare or with care experience. Contact Brenda on 091 395605 or 0876249344.

### Epilepsy Ireland

Epilepsy Ireland provides a professional information service to support and empower people with epilepsy and their families, who have problems coming to terms with the condition and its implications. (Contact 091-587640).

### National Advocacy Service

The National Advocacy Service aims to provide independent advocates to people with disabilities who find it difficult to speak for themselves. (Contact Rebecca or Andrea on 091-528325).

## Events in Westside Library - Autumn 2015

**Weekly Storytime** for little ones every Friday 3.30 pm. Event free, all welcome.

**Con Tempo Musical Workshop** Wed, 14 October with a local class group.

**Derek Mulveen**, Galway based children's author will visit on Fri, 30 October at 3.30pm. Event free and all welcome.

**"Yeats and the West"** talk by Sr de Lourdes Fahy Tue, 3 November at 2.30pm

**Con Tempo Musical Workshop** Wed, 11 November with a local class group.

**Galway's Great Read Event – The works of Walter Macken with Ciara Murphy** Tue, 17 November 11.00-12.30

**Con Tempo Christmas Concert** Tue, 15 Dec at 4.00 pm. Event free. All welcome.

**Christmas stories and sing-along** in December date and time to be confirmed.

**Class visits** from local primary and secondary schools. Contact library for further details.

**Reading groups** – Two morning reading groups meet on the first and fourth Wednesday of the month at 12:00. Another group meets at 6.30pm on the second Wednesday of every month. Contact Westside Library for further information.



**Two Reading Aloud Groups** – Quality literature is shared with groups who are not reading themselves. Contact Cora for further information on the Reading Aloud project.

**Newcastle Active Retirement Group** meets weekly on Tuesday (2.00-5.00). New members welcome.

**For Us Now Women's Group** meet every Wednesday (10am-1pm). New members welcome.

**Westside Library Knitting Group** meets every Wednesday (2.00-4.00). Drop in for a cup of tea and a knit.

**Vipassana Meditation Group** meets weekly on Wednesday (6.00-7.00).

**Cuidiú Breastfeeding Support Group** meets on the second Thursday of every month (10.00-12.30).