

Summary of survey

Thomas Street Creative - Online Stakeholder Survey

Date: 18th February - 14th March 2025

The Pocket Park and Community Art House project presents a number of key opportunities for Waterford. The introduction of biodiversity rich green spaces within the urban fabric of the city, space for artists to work, collaborate and engage with the wider community, space for community and residents to engage with art practice and each other.

In February and March 2025, through an online survey, Waterford City & County Council sought community views on the proposed development of Thomas Street Creative Project. Respondents were asked to complete the short survey. The feedback was used for the purpose of brief development for this project.

Summary of responses.

Who took the survey?

There were 57 respondents, 45 of whom expressed an interest in receiving updates on the project and invitations to future consultation events. 57% of respondents live in Waterford city centre and a further 25% live in the surrounding area. 26% of those surveyed, work in the city centre. Only 2 respondents attend college in Waterford and 5 attend school. No visitors to Waterford took the survey.

The survey represents the views of many who live in the city and the surrounding areas. However, it did not get a significant response from young adults or teens. This could be addressed with a more targeted survey through school and colleges.

Interest in cultural activities

Asked if they take part in any cultural activities as a hobby or in a professional capacity, 72% of respondents said that they do. These activities included music, choral singing, art, drama, creative writing, film production, Waterford Walls, crafts, dance and theatre. They were asked how often they would take part in the following types of activities:

How often would you take part in the following cultural activities in a social setting	total respondents	Often		Sometimes		Never		No response	
Music	57	13	23%	30	53%	7	12%	7	12%
Art (Painting, drawing, crafts etc.)	57	9	16%	19	33%	18	32%	11	19%
Theatre, drama, writing	57	5	9%	32	56%	12	21%	8	14%
Film	57	12	21%	29	51%	11	19%	5	9%
Gardening	57	3	5%	11	19%	26	46%	17	30%
Talks of interest	57	6	11%	36	63%	9	16%	6	11%
Markets (food, arts, crafts etc.)	57	16	28%	33	58%	5	9%	3	5%

Community Groups reached

Participation in community groups is strong among respondents with 70% actively involved in a local group. Groups and festivals in which respondents are involved include:

Catu	Waterford Civic Trust
Garter Lane	Waterford Film Centre
GOMA Gallery of Modern Art	Waterford Gallery of Art
Knitting in Ferrybank	Waterford Hungarian Cultural Organisation
Lifeboat	Waterford New Communities Network
Little Red Kettle Theatre Company	Waterford older peoples council
Monthly sea swim	Waterford Volunteer Centre
Mount Sion GAA	Waterford Writers
PPN Public Participation Network	Winterval
SEA South East Artists	Womens Shed sewing group
Southeast women in film network	Wordweavers writing group
Spraoi	Youthreach Waterford
St Patricks Day Festival	

Facilities considered important

In your opinion how important are the following facilities	total respondents	important		Not important		No Opinion	
Pocket Park (outdoor courtyard/garden space)	57	46	81%	7	12%	4	7%
Community Arts Workshop / Multipurpose Space	57	38	67%	6	11%	13	23%
Dedicated Gallery Space	57	23	40%	13	23%	21	37%
Integrated Gallery Space	57	28	49%	10	18%	19	33%
Artist Studios	57	36	63%	5	9%	16	28%
Writers Room	57	24	42%	8	14%	25	44%
Cafe / coffee shop	57	38	67%	3	5%	16	28%
Bookshop / art supplies	57	29	51%	9	16%	19	33%
Outdoor covered spaces	57	42	74%	6	11%	9	16%
Sculpture or Wall art	57	40	70%	4	7%	13	23%
Semi-public bathroom facilities	57	35	61%	7	12%	15	26%

Of facilities suggested in the survey, the pocket park and outdoor covered spaces, sculpture and wall art were considered important by the highest number of respondents, 70-80%. The community arts workshop / multipurpose space, the cafe/coffee shop, artists studios and bathroom facilities were also shown to be important for more than 60% of respondents. Half of respondents rated the bookshop and integrated gallery space as important, while dedicated gallery space was important for less respondents.

Respondents were also asked to suggest other facilities. These included:

Artists

- Workshop with kiln, woodworking tools, CNC and silversmithing
- Studio space for Screen printing / sculpture, ceramics, darkroom
- Artist in residence programme (incl. living accommodation)
- Space for creative work such as writing

Film, Music, Dance

- Music room
- Rehearsal/dance studio
- Semi indoor/outdoor space for events or small gigs
- Screening Room for art films with high quality sound design
- Managed outdoor screenings for pop-up events
- Equipment rentals and independent film screenings
- Meeting space & office space (for festivals, board meetings, visiting film companies)
- Adequate electrical plugs/usb C, 63 amp LX supply (interior & exterior)
- Box office space (for gigs)
- Storage space
- Music space for live performance

Community

- Priority for community spaces over bookshop/art supplies
- Small nighttime events (no-alcohol)
- Worksop space for hosting programmes
- More programming for teens and kids
- Hang - out space
- Safe late night access to alcohol free social spaces
- Class space
- Meeting space
- Warm & welcoming 'inclusive' space - avoid closed door 'barriers'
- A place for kids to play safely
- Indoor community space with kitchenette for group meetings
- Storage / lockers for community groups for equipment for use at workshops
- Office space (for festival planning (production, volunteer & artist space)

- Secure access to meeting space in the evenings

Outdoor space

- Free outdoor space
- Green space
- Exercise equipment
- A place for kids to play safely
- Picnic tables / benches
- Partially covered outdoor space with planted beds, hanging gardens
- Mosaic walls, seating ,water feature (not a fountain)
- A prominent sculpture
- A city oasis - sensory space incorporating sound/light/touch/smell.

One respondent suggested a connection with Henry Downes pub next door so that alcohol could be served during events day or evening. Another suggested an alternative use as an apartment. Park was mentioned by one respondent.

Activities and Programmes of interest

What arts activities or programmes would interest you or your family members	total respondents	Interested		Not interested		No Opinion	
Art Classes (art, craft, mosaic, textiles, sculpture)	57	40	70%	7	12%	10	18%
Arts and Cultural diversity initiatives celebrating new communities	57	34	60%	10	18%	13	23%
Older people / active retired arts programmes	57	31	54%	10	18%	16	28%
Youth Arts	57	27	47%	11	19%	19	33%
Schools programmes	57	22	39%	10	18%	25	44%
Markets / art festivals	57	47	82%	4	7%	6	11%
Film screenings / outdoor performance (eg. music generation)	57	48	84%	1	2%	8	14%
Cultural food events	57	39	68%	7	12%	11	19%
Garden / biodiversity related programmes	57	37	65%	6	11%	14	25%

The activities which respondents were most interested in were markets / arts festivals and film screenings and outdoor performances, with more than 80% of respondents indicating their interest. 70% of respondents were interested in art classes, followed closely but cultural food events and garden / biodiversity programmes. School programmes and youth programmes were of less interest which is expected, given with the low response generally from a younger demographic.

Asked what other programmes would be of interest, respondents identified a number of activities, as follows:

- Music rehearsals
- Dancing & performance
- Music events (DJ, drag)
- Community meals
- Fundraiser events for essential services
- Clothes up-cycling
- Writing classes
- Outdoor film nights
- Live music (upcoming artists)
- Cultural skills exchange
- Human library project
- Multicultural & intercultural activities
- Cultural food events
- Music & dance workshops
- Casula non-specific activities
- Neighbourhood activities
- Dance & circus classes
- Book festivals / events/ book-swap, read, buy, sell
- Theatre & concert performances
- Reading group
- T'ai Chi classes
- Outdoors games such as chess boards, hopscotch

Concerns raised

One respondent raised a concern over drug use and anti social behavior in the pocket park. Another questioned how the project would be resourced and how the community would interact with this new space without impacting negatively on existing arts spaces, which they consider chronically underfunded. The respondent would like to understand how this space will connect to existing arts spaces and organisations in the Cultural Quarter.

Community Groups activities of interest

Respondents were asked if involved in a community group, what type of programmes and events would be of interest to their group. The following responses were received:

Programme/event or activity	Group in which respondent is a member (if specified)
Music	
Making (sculpture & furniture)	
Painting & drawing, open gallery	
Music & Drama	

Club nights	Alien Nation
monthly arts workshops	Queer arts club
Mutual Aid	Mutual Aid
Poster making	Catu
Readings from authors / workshops	Wordweavers writing group
Writing & literature	Waterford Writers
Film related talks & screenings. A space for meetings with a coffee area.	Southeast women in film network
Music events & Films	Waterford older peoples council
Biodiversity information events	Lifeboat
Multicultural festival (Example A Slice of Culture, Wyse Park 2024)	Waterford New Communities Network and the Waterford Hungarian Cultural Organisation
Art, culture, sculpture, food & film	Waterford Civic Trust
Art, music, film, theatre, discussion & talks	SEA South East Artists
Community art initiatives & community growing activities	Youthreach Waterford
Cultural heritage events - food, clothing, traditions, crafts etc.	Waterford New Communities Network Women's Shed
Learning & Creative training workshops. Small group creative activities, eg. Writers Circle	GOMA, WFC, WGOA

Other comments

One respondent suggested that programmes be sponsored rather than fee paying.

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