

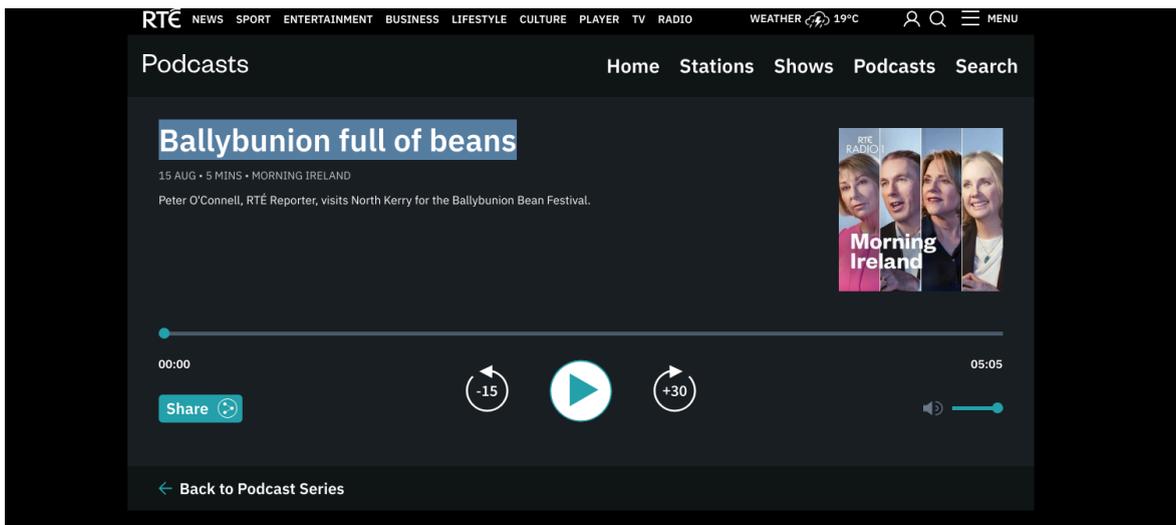
## BRILLIANT BALLYBUNION MEDIA COVERAGE 2024-2025

Thank you to all the journalists, broadcasters and social media followers who have supported our creative climate action work over the last two years.

[www.brilliantballybunion.com](http://www.brilliantballybunion.com)

**RTE Morning Ireland, Ballybunion Full Of Beans, Peter O Connell, 15<sup>th</sup> August 2025**  
(Average listenership 460,000)

<https://www.rte.ie/radio/podcasts/22537697-ballybunion-full-of-beans/>



The screenshot shows the RTE website's podcast player interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'RTÉ' and various categories like NEWS, SPORT, ENTERTAINMENT, BUSINESS, LIFESTYLE, CULTURE, PLAYER, TV, RADIO, WEATHER, and a menu icon. Below this, the 'Podcasts' section is active, with navigation links for Home, Stations, Shows, Podcasts, and Search. The main content area features a podcast titled 'Ballybunion full of beans' with a subtitle '15 AUG • 5 MINS • MORNING IRELAND'. A description reads: 'Peter O'Connell, RTÉ Reporter, visits North Kerry for the Ballybunion Bean Festival.' To the right is a thumbnail image of the 'Morning Ireland' radio show. Below the title is a progress bar showing '00:00' and '05:05', with playback controls including a play button, a '-15' button, a '+30' button, and a volume slider. A 'Share' button is also visible. At the bottom left, there is a link to '< Back to Podcast Series'.



**Irish Examiner, Ballybunion Bean Festival-A new and deliciously quirky festival, Clodagh Finn, 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2024**  
**(370,000 weekly readers / 3 million online monthly readers)**  
<https://www.irishexaminer.com/opinion/columnists/arid-41691561.html>

An Irishwoman's Diary

**Give the arts a sporting chance with a daily slot on Six One**

**T**HERE'S a wonderful account in the life of St Lasair, a miracle-working holy woman of the early Irish church, that illustrates how revered — and feared — poets once were in ancient Ireland. It describes how the saint was struck with terror one day when she saw "nine hungry poets and men of learning" come towards her looking for hospitality at a time when she had nothing to give them. She "blushed deep" and retreated to the chapel to pray fervently for help because she feared her failure to feed them would be immortalised in a stigmata poem.

Her prayers were answered just in the nick of time: a rain materialised out of nowhere laden down with food and drink to offer the visitors. I love the story because it's told in one of the few surviving accounts of the life of a woman, "noble and honoured", who had real religious power. It also offers a timely reminder that we once held poets, harpists, and art-makers of all description in such high esteem.

Fast forward several centuries and that band of harpists would find themselves in an Ireland where people working in the arts are "pushed into financial precarity, and even poverty", to quote the National Campaign for the Arts.

In one study, the Campaign found that over 50% of those surveyed in October 2023 were struggling to afford basic things like food, clothes and heating, compared to 17% in the general population.

Those questioned were among the very many who did not benefit from the Government's Basic Income for Arts, a pilot scheme that has supported 2,000 artists with a weekly income of €255 since 2022.

As the scheme draws to a close, the Government is asking the public for its view of the policy in an open consultation. Now's your chance to speak up for the culture-makers before the September 5 deadline.

I've heard it said that the scheme offers money for nothing. And there are some who still think 'the Arts' are somehow exclusive or, worse, the preserve of people with "notions".

Well, here's to people with notions because anyone who has ever read a book, felt the thrill of connection at a gig concert, or been moved to tears/laughter in a theatre auditorium knows that culture is the polar opposite of elite; it is the pulse in the



Artist Lisa Flingleton: 'It is so important that the news reflects the cultural life of Ireland.'

Picture: Mark Boland

everyday that gives our lives meaning.

How wonderful, then, to hear actor Brendan Gleeson suggest that RTE introduce a daily arts section on the *Six One News*.

The actor, in his usual joyful, inspiring and convincing way, called on the national broadcaster to

temper the rolling news of war and horror with the levitation of a daily arts segment.

It would, he said, ease anxiety and show people that there is good and proper kindness going around the world. "The arts are largely there to make people feel less alone."

And, he said it would be a great testament to the late Seán Rocks, the much-missed presenter of *Aréna*, the arts and culture programme.

RTE might argue that it is already "supporting the arts", as its popular slogan has it. It does indeed support the arts but not in the same way as it supports, say, sport. There is a daily sports section on Six One, so why not a daily arts section?

Indeed, in a week topped and tailed by two concerts in the sporting mecca that is Croke Park, it is crystal clear that sport and culture are just two sides of the same coin. They are hewn from the same place deep within us that hankers after community, connection and crisis.

Close your eyes for a moment. The deafening roar, the turbo-charge rippling through the stands and the rising euphoria that greeted Oasis were exactly the same as the electric

charge that runs through the stadium on All-Ireland day. There will be the same drama and emotion when Robbie Williams takes the stage tonight.

It would be interesting to do the sums too. The Oasis gigs led to a 9% rise in consumer spending, one headline said. Another recent report estimated that the Irish music industry contributed €1bn to the economy. Why, then, don't we report on this profit-generating sector of our economy daily? We have daily business news, after all.

And it's not as if there isn't enough going on around the country. It's a pity the cameras which travelled to Tralee to film the losses didn't come a little earlier to cover the Ballybunion Bean Festival. This new and deliciously quirky festival

was organised by artist Lisa Flingleton and brilliant Ballybunion to highlight the potential of beans as a fun and climate-friendly food for the future.

If art connects, it also has the power to bring about change. As Flingleton says: "The news needs to highlight this potential, and not just focus on all the negative news which only creates fear and stagnation. There are so many people doing extraordinary things and so many wonderful, imaginative and creative projects that we just don't see reflected in our national news."

Such is *Anam*, the new arts and literature festival launched in Tralee last year. It's too late now to talk about the line-up of writers, poets, spoken-word artists, musicians and playwrights it brought together for a three-day event in July.

Though, it's not too late to feature one of those playwrights, Mary Quirk, whose prolific work is a study in the symbiotic relationship between sport and culture.

She has written and directed numerous novelty-art scripts for Scór, the part of the GAA which promotes Irish culture and creativity. She has also written, produced and directed four full-length plays which were performed at the clubhouse of Tralee GAA team, Na Caeil.

She's back in the clubhouse on September 12 and 13 to direct Mary Ross in *Shirley Valentine*, a tribute to Mary Ross's late mother Irene Ross and a fundraiser for the palliative care unit at University Hospital Kerry.

That single event is a lesson in how culture acts as the glue in our communities.

Mary Quirk is also a creative associate with the Arts Council, helping schools to integrate arts and creativity into education. We are reminded frequently of the benefit of encouraging sport in schools, but not nearly often enough of the benefits of creativity.

She speaks effusively about those benefits — lifelong communication skills and confidence to mention two — and says it's her vision that every child be given the opportunity to



Playwright Mary Quirk: 'It is my vision that every child be given the opportunity to engage in creativity and the arts.'



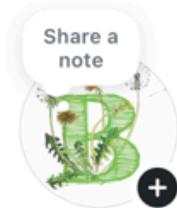
**Clodagh Finn**

Instagram, Brilliant Ballybunion, 90,000 views, 25th August 2025  
<https://www.instagram.com/brilliantballybunion/>

18:59



brilliantballyb...



**182** posts   **840** followers   **232** following

Thank you for making the Ballybunion Bean Festival so brilliant! See you at [#earthrising @immaireland](#) 13-14 Sept  
[www.brilliantballybunion.com](http://www.brilliantballybunion.com)

**Brilliant Ballybunion** 1 recent post

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90.8K views in the last 30 days.

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New



Bean Festi...



BNG



Square To...



Sustainat



# Radio Kerry, Ours to Protect: Protecting The Ring Plover, 10<sup>th</sup> August 2025

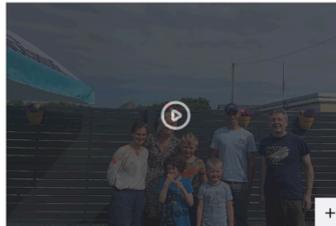
<https://www.radiokerry.ie/podcasts/ourstoprotect2025/ours-to-protect-protecting-the-ringed-plover-446596>

radiokerry.ie/podcasts/ourstoprotect2025/ours-to-protect-protecting-the-ringed-plover-446596

## OURS TO PROTECT

### Ours to Protect- Protecting the Ringed Plover

AUG 25, 2025 17:41  
BY RADIOKERRYNEWS



Share this article     

This week on Ours to Protect we're speaking to members of Brilliant Ballybunion about their efforts to track and protect the Ringed Plover, a once ubiquitous wading bird who has experienced declining numbers, and is now under amber conservation status in Ireland.

We speak to Sean Culhane, who has been observing the bird since childhood, as well as Dr Barry O'Donoghue from the National Parks and Wildlife Service, who's involved in the programme, along with at least 30 volunteers. We also speak with volunteers Aine Hellard and Sarah Nolan, as well as 6 year-old Oscar, 7 year-old Michael and 5 year-old Christopher.



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## RECOMMENDED



**NEWS**  
Swimmer rescued from the water at O'Carroll's Cove this...  
AUG 25, 2025 17:46



**NEWS**  
Gardaí appeal for information about serious assault durf...  
AUG 25, 2025 17:19



**SPORT**  
2 Kerry FC players on First Division team of the week  
AUG 25, 2025 17:01



**SPORT**  
MTU Student GAA Club to Celebrate 50th Anniversary with...  
AUG 25, 2025 16:27

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## Index

### Cool beans

Food labs, soil fixing, free food and beans aplenty. The Ballybunion Bean Festival might just be the most brilliant idea yet from artist Lisa Fingleton. August 16th, brilliantballybunion.com



### Timbertrove

Home baking and great coffee in the lea of the Hellfire Club. Round off that healthy walk with a rhubarb crumble, or two? timbertrovecafe.com

### The sweet scent of pits

Chemical free, plastic free and made in Cork. Raise a toast without the waft to Vico Deodorant in a range of enticing aromas, €12.99 vicodeo.com

## WHAT'S HOT

### BIIRD

Big week for the 11-strong all-girl super-trad group who had crowds bopping at the main stage at All Together Now, and in a packed pub for a surprise gig with Ed Sheeran at the Fleadh Cheoil in Wexford.

### Pick of the bunch

Business started for sustainable... Food

## We Love...



### Good foundations

▲ Whether it's the ground beneath your feet, the walls that rise around you, or the trees that...



## Ballybunion News, Article, 7th August 2025



Sea Rescue Members with Minister Jerry Buttimer and local politicians during the Minister's visit to Ballybunion. Pic by JK Photography

EMAIL :[mail@ballybunionnews.com](mailto:mail@ballybunionnews.com)

TEL :087

### BALLYBUNION NEWS

#### BALLYBUNION BEAN FESTIVAL



Well-known American actress Cynthia Nixon on her recent visit to Ballybunion promoting the Bean Festival with Lisa Fingleton of Beautiful Ballybunion. Pic by Pilar Vahey

The Ballybunion Bean Festival taking place at the Barna Way on Saturday August 16th promises to be one of the highlights of summer 2025.

This brand new, unique festival focuses on the potential of beans as the most fun and climate friendly food for the future.

The festival was born out of *Brilliant Ballybunion*, a Creative Climate Action Initiative, supported by Creative Ireland.

While growing food, nurturing nature, and creating art together, the Brilliant Ballybunion team began to imagine a new future for local food production and community resilience in the face of the climate and biodiversity crises.

The future is beans! Beans are an amazing source of protein, perfect for a plant based or a climatarian diet and they fix nitrogen in the soil and help local ecosystems to thrive whilst also providing an opportunity for a new model of food production from home and community gardens, to small and big farmers alike.

Growing beans can happen at any scale and the Ballybunion Bean Festival is a blueprint for what is possible - by bringing together local artists, collaborators, chefs, and businesses, it demonstrates how community action can be intentional, meaningful, and fun.

For the last few months, the community has been growing beans for a feast, and the Festival will take place within the enchanting woodlands, gardens and organic meadows of the Barna Way (V31 YK68) and will be followed by a concert with *Sailhymn*.

Come and join this truly slow food feast and brand new festival which will be gas craic, full of beans and other corny puns.

**THE TINTIN BALLYBUNION BEAN FESTIVAL**  
Ballybunion, Kerry  
AUGUST 15TH TO 17TH

**FRIDAY 15TH AUG.**  
DOORS 7PM | SHOW 8PM  
WITH BILLY DONEGAN & THE COURTYARDS

**SATURDAY 16TH AUG.**  
DOORS 7PM | SHOW 8PM  
CIRCUS PONIES

**SUNDAY 17TH AUG.**  
2 GREAT FILMS  
CINEMA  
SUPPORTED BY KERRY COUNTY COUNCIL  
2PM FILM FINDING NEMO

Purchase Tickets online at [www.ballybunionbeanfestival.com](https://www.ballybunionbeanfestival.com)

**FRIDAY 15TH AUGUST** PATRICK WARD

**THE TINTIN BALLYBUNION BEAN FESTIVAL**  
Ballybunion, Kerry  
**SHARON**  
with guests Alan Connor & The Courtyards

**SATURDAY 9TH AUGUST**  
Doors 7.00pm | Concert  
Tickets: Adults €30 / U16's €20

Scan the QR Code to purchase your tickets

EMAIL :[mail@ballybunionnews.com](mailto:mail@ballybunionnews.com)

TEL :087

QUALITY ADVERTISING THAT WORKS

## Country vibes... a few of our favourite things

What we're loving around the country this week.

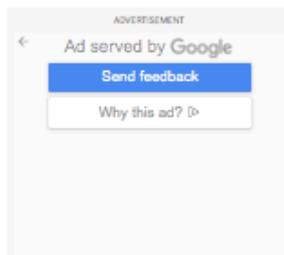


Picture of the week: Pat Byrne pictured with son Seán bringing in the harvest in Hurlstone, Co Louth. In the distance, Pat's brother Pádraic drives the combine. \ Stobhan Byrne

### Sex and the... farm!

There was a surprise visitor to The Barna Way farm in Co Kerry this week. Cynthia Nixon from Sex and the City swapped the surrounds of Manhattan and her stilettos for a pair of runners and a Ferguson tractor. Still looking as stylish as ever, Cynthia was shown around the farm and the different food, peace and nature projects happening there. Her visit happened just before the

Ballybunion Bean Festival on 15-16 August, which is a celebration of sustainable food production, focusing on the potential of beans as the food of the future.



Cynthia Nixon and Molly (The Massey Ferguson) at The Barna Way farm in Ballybunion. \Lisa Fingleton

**Agriland Article about the Cynthia Nixon Visit to The Barna Way and Ballybunion Bean Festival mention/photo, 31 July 2025**

<https://www.agriland.ie/farming-news/sex-and-the-city-star-gets-a-taste-of-farming-life-in-kerry>

Y

## Sex and the City star gets a taste of farming life in Kerry



By Aisling O'Brien  
July 31, 2025 6:00 PM

Share this article



Cynthia Nixon on the farm's Massey Ferguson. Image: Lisa Fingleton

US television star Cynthia Nixon has briefly swapped the streets of Manhattan for a farm in north Co. Kerry.

The actor, best known for starring as Miranda in the hit series 'Sex and the City', paid a visit to Rena Blake and [Lisa Fingleton](#) on their organic farm, The Barna Way, close to Ballybunion last weekend.

# Radio Kerry, Talkabout with Deirdre Walsh, Ballybunion Bean Festival and Deirdre Walsh, 30 July 2025

<https://www.radiokerry.ie/news/sex-and-the-city-star-cynthia-nixon-visits-ballybunion-445087>

radiokerry.ie/news/sex-and-the-city-star-cynthia-nixon-visits-ballybunion-445087



ON AIR NOW  
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Tóg Sos with Mary Conroy  
20:00 - 22:00

RADIO KERRY

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NEWS

## Sex and the City star Cynthia Nixon visits Ballybunion

JUL 30, 2025 13:15

BY RADIOKERRYNEWS



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One of America's most famous TV stars has paid a low-key visit to Ballybunion.

Actor [Cynthia Nixon](#), best known for her role as Miranda in the hit series 'Sex and

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RECOMMENDED



NEWS

Swimmer rescued from the water at O'Carroll's Cove this...  
AUG 25, 2025 17:46



NEWS

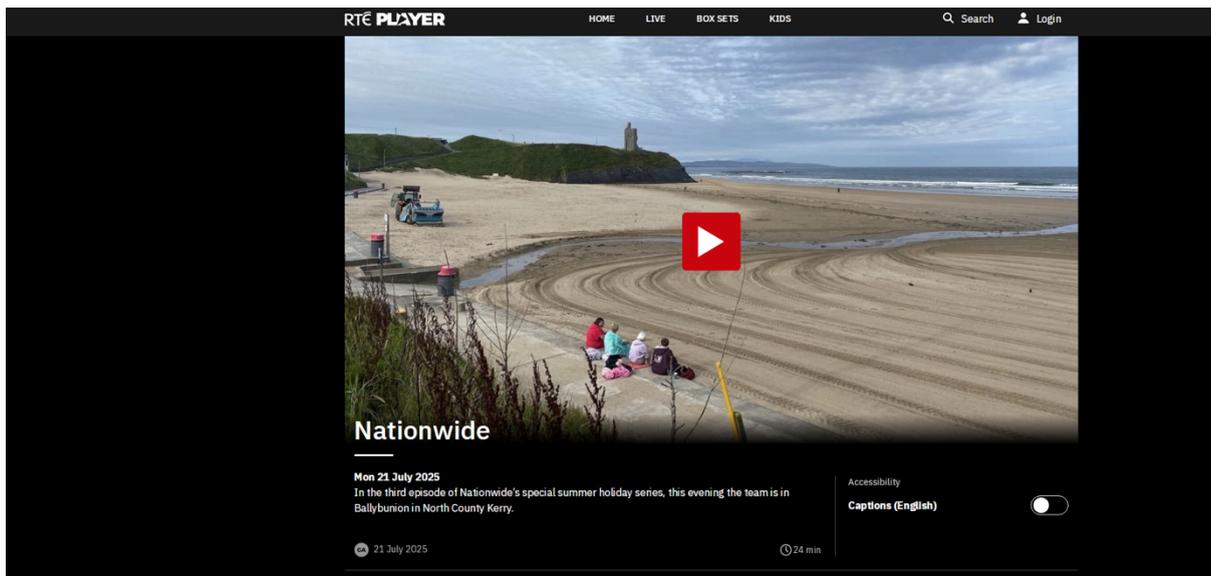
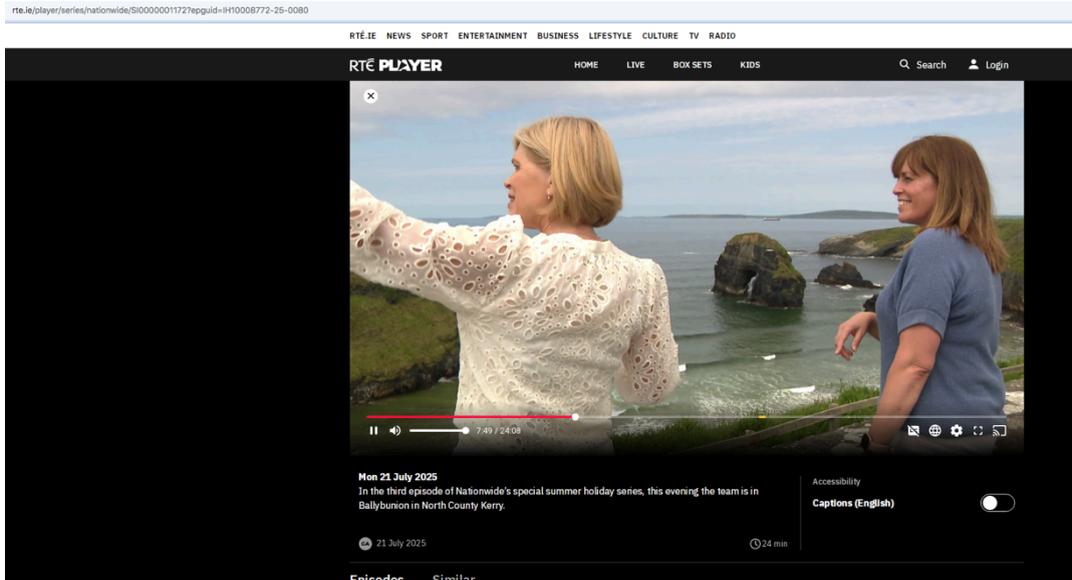
Gardaí appeal for information about serious assault duri...  
AUG 25, 2025 17:39



SPORT

2 Kerry FC players on First Division team of the week  
AUG 25, 2025 17:01

**RTE Nationwide, Feature on Food and Nature in Ballybunion, 21 July 2025,**  
<https://www.rte.ie/player/series/nationwide/SI0000001172?epguid=IH10008772-25-0080>



**Ballybunion Bean Festival, Featured on Farming for Nature Website, July 2025**

<https://www.farmingfornature.ie/events-calendar-event/ballybunion-bean-festival/>



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## Ballybunion Bean Festival

**August 16 9:00 am 8:00 pm**

**Join the Bean Revolution!** Discover innovative ideas that challenge today's food system and explore how humble beans can lead the way toward sustainability, healthy soils, and community empowerment.

[TO BOOK TICKETS CLICK HERE](#)

The Ballybunion Bean Festival promises to be one of the highlights of summer 2025. This brand new, unique festival focuses on the potential of beans as the most fun and climate friendly food for the future.

The Ballybunion Bean Festival was born out of Brilliant Ballybunion, a Creative Climate Action Initiative, supported by Creative Ireland. While growing food, nurturing nature, and creating art together, the Brilliant Ballybunion team began to imagine a new future for local food production and community resilience in the face of the climate and biodiversity crises.

The future is beans! Beans are an amazing source of protein, perfect for a plant based or a climatarian diet. Beans fix nitrogen in the soil and help local ecosystems to thrive. Beans also provide an opportunity for a new model of food production – from home and community gardens to small and big farmers alike. Growing beans can happen at any scale.

The Ballybunion Bean Festival is a blueprint for what is possible – by bringing together local artists, collaborators, chefs, and businesses, it demonstrates how community action can be intentional, meaningful, and fun!

For the last few months, the community has been growing beans for a feast, which will be followed by a concert with Sallhym. The Festival will take place within the beautiful woodlands, gardens and organic meadows of The Barna Way.

Come join this truly slow food feast. This brand new festival will be gas craic, full of beans and other corny puns.

[TO BOOK TICKETS CLICK HERE](#)

## Discover Ireland Website, Ballybunion Bean festival, July 2025

<https://www.discoverireland.ie/kerry/ballybunion-bean-festival-2025>

discoverireland.ie/kerry/ballybunion-bean-festival-2025



Discover Ireland Search for destinations, things to do, what's on and more [View Map](#)

Home > Destinations > Kerry > Ballybunion > Ballybunion Bean Festival ...

## Ballybunion Bean Festival 2025



[Ballybunion](#), Co. Kerry [16 August 2025](#)

[HEALTH AND WELLBEING](#) [NATURE AND WILDLIFE](#) [FOOD EXPERIENCES](#)

This brand new, unique festival focuses on the potential of beans as the most fun and climate friendly food for the future. The festival is hosted by Brilliant Ballybunion and is supported by the Creative Climate Action Fund through Creative Ireland.

[Visit Website](#)

[Book now](#)

**Contact details**

[+353868944292](#)

[Ballybunion, Ballybunion, Ballybunion, Co. Kerry, Ireland](#)

Experience as part of 

## Irish Organic Association, July Newsletter

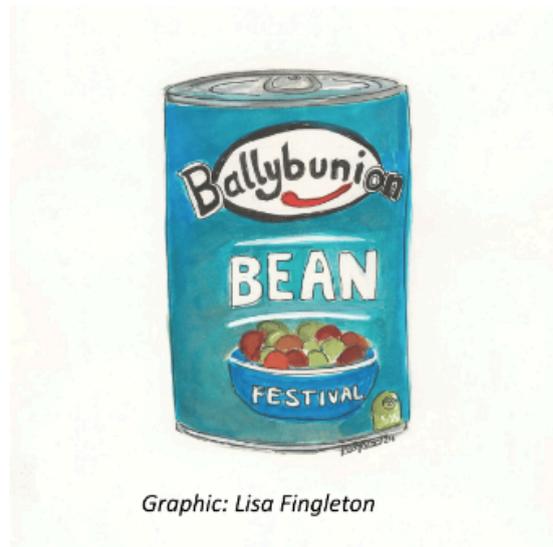


Irish Organic Association  
Organic Certification at its best

Newsletter  
July Edition



[Ballybunion Bean Festival](#) (16th August): The day-long event organised by Rena Blake and Lisa Fingleton from the Barna Way in North Kerry centres around a celebration of the humble bean and how it can support sustainability, healthy soils, and community empowerment. This will include a fun-filled day of activities from thought-provoking talks, guided walks, and interactive workshops to film, music, and shared meals. The event also focuses on preserving heirloom and resilient bean varieties as part of a "Saved Beans for 2026" initiative to ensure that native beans endure and thrive for future generations.



Graphic: Lisa Fingleton

# RTE Homegrown, Feature on The Barna Way and Brilliant Ballybunion, 16<sup>th</sup> April 2025

<https://www.rte.ie/player/series/home-grown/10001042-00-0000?epguid=A110005843-03-00>

07

rte.ie/player/series/home-grown/10001042-00-0000?epguid=A110005843-03-0007

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07. Episode 7  
Kitty examines Ireland's efforts to protect our borders against plant pests and diseases; Colm heads to Offaly to meet one of Ireland's largest organic growers.

Accessibility  
Captions (English)

16 April 2025 24 min

Episodes Similar

Siamsa Tíre Programme, The Art of Sustenance Sisterhood and solidarity, 8th March 2025

# The Art of Sustenance, Sisterhood and Solidarity

International Women's Day at Siamsa Tíre  
10am-1pm, 8th March 2025



Join artists Bernadette Kiely, Lisa Fingleton, Silke Michels, Zoë Uí Fhaoláin and Zoe Rush for this inspiring International Women's Day event at Siamsa Tíre. Exploring the role of artists in creative climate action and protecting mother eARTH. €10. Booking: [www.siamsatire.com](http://www.siamsatire.com)

This event is supported by Siamsa Tíre, Creative Ireland (in partnership with Brilliant Ballybunion and Neart na Machairí) and the Kerry Visual Artist In Residence programme (The Arts Council and Kerry County Council).



# RTE, The Culture File Weekly, The Square Tomato and The Third Kingdom, 8<sup>th</sup> Feb 2025

<https://www.rte.ie/radio/lyricfm/clips/22487039/>

rte.ie/radio/lyricfm/clips/22487039/

RTE NEWS SPORT ENTERTAINMENT BUSINESS LIFESTYLE CULTURE PLAYER TV RADIO WEATHER 19°C MENU

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## The Culture File Weekly 080225: The Square Tomato and The Third Kingdom

CLIP • 29 MINS • 07 FEB • LORCAN MURRAY'S CLASSIC DRIVE

Artist-farmer Lisa Fingleton's new exhibition takes its title from a sci-fi fruit: The Square Tomato; "corn smut" at The Third Kingdom mushroom-based restaurant in New York; and Paddy Woodworth finds a place for Olivia Laing on The Naturalist's Bookshelf.



00:00 -15 29:10 +30

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# Independent / Kerryman, The Square Tomato, 4<sup>th</sup> Feb 2025

<https://www.independent.ie/regionals/kerry/lifestyle/kerry-artist-lisa-fingleton-delighted-with-r esponse-to-opening-of-her-square-tomato-exhibition/a356202804.html>

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## Kerry

Change country

### Kerry artist Lisa Fingleton delighted with response to opening of her 'Square Tomato' exhibition



Artist Lisa Fingleton from Ballybunton pictured at the opening of her new exhibition 'The Square Tomato' in Tralee's Siamsa Tire at the weekend. Photo by Dominick Walsh.



Fergus Dennehy

Kerryman  
Tue 4 Feb 2025 at 04:00



North Kerry artist Lisa Fingleton said this week that the response to the opening of her brand new exhibition 'The Square Tomato' in Siamsa Tire over the weekend was "just fantastic."

Inspired by the work of Indian writer and global food activist Dr Vandana Shiva, Lisa, through her exhibition, exposes the challenges of our food systems in terms of biodiversity, climate change and health.

Through her role as embedded artist with two large scale Creative Climate Action Projects, she helps to supports communities to explore how we can grow food, protect nature and be creative all at the same time.

Speaking to *The Kerryman* on Monday, Lisa gave us a teaser as to what people can expect if they pop into see the exhibition which is set to run until March 22.

"It [the opening] was just fantastic. My dream was that we would have over 100 people at it and we had well over that, so it was super.

"I've been doing this work in Kerry for nearly 20 years and I felt like everyone that had been on the journey with me was there at the opening. It was amazing. There's a brilliant amount of community activists and growers and artists interested in

### Kerry Latest News

Tralee  
Kerry gardai investigating assault during Rose of Tralee festivities  
17:16



Gaelic Football PREMIUM  
Jack O'Connor to stay on as manager of All-Ireland champions Kerry for another two years  
17:11



Tralee  
Kerry gardai seize sulkies following complaints  
17:00



North & West Kerry  
HSE won't provide details of cost of North Kerry CAMHS consultants as anger continues over delay  
17:00



Tralee  
Kerry audience honours master of Irish trad music with standing ovation at 'extraordinary' concert  
17:00



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# RTE Nationwide, Feature on The Barna Way and Brilliant Ballybunion, 22 May 2024

<https://www.rte.ie/player/series/nationwide/SI0000001172?epguid=IH10002393-23-0055>

RTÉ.IE NEWS SPORT ENTERTAINMENT BUSINESS LIFESTYLE CULTURE TV RADIO

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Wed 22 May 2024

An eclectic round-up of news, views and events from around the country each week.

Accessibility

Captions (English)



22 May 2024

24 min

Episodes Similar

**Agriland, The Square Tomato, Aisling O'Brien, 26<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

<https://www.agriland.ie/farming-news/kerry-exhibition-to-focus-on-food-farming-and-climate-change>

## Kerry exhibition to focus on food, farming and climate change



By Aisling O'Brien  
January 26, 2025 9:00 AM

Share this article



Lisa Fingleton, artist, writer and food grower Image: Adrian Donoghue

The challenges facing our food systems will be the subject of a new art exhibition in Co. [Kerry](#), due to open next weekend.

Lisa Fingleton, who is an artist, filmmaker, writer and grower, told *Agriland* that the free show at Siamsa Tíre, Tralee brings together a "highly eclectic and dynamic" range of drawings, films and installations.

**Irish Times, Year in Review, 10 great Irish Exhibitions in 2025, 20th December 2025**

# 10 GREAT IRISH EXHIBITIONS IN 2025

Our favourite art shows over the past 12 months include Mainie Jellett and Evie Hone at the National Gallery, Kunstkammer, in Waterford, and Lisa Fingleton, in Tralee

## GEMMA TIPTON

**C**hange is in the air as 2025 winds down. The Hugh Lane Gallery, in Dublin, has closed for renovations, ending its on-site exhibitions for now with Ailbhe Ní Bhriain's hauntingly gorgeous *The Dream Pool Intervals*.

With the Crawford Art Gallery also closed since the end of 2024, and neither space expected to reopen until 2028, the gap is more keenly felt in Cork, although the Lavit Gallery, and Sample-Studios' exhibitions at the Lord Mayor's Pavilion in Fitzgerald's Park, have increasingly interesting programming.

Moves are also afoot in Limerick and Dublin, with Una McCarthy having stepped down from her role at Limerick City Gallery of Art after a decade as its director, and Patrick Murphy also retiring from the RHA after 28 years at the helm. At the time of writing, their successors have yet to be announced.

At the EVA International contemporary art biennial, in Limerick, Eszter Szakács curated a show with fewer artists and venues than previously, instead leaning into the idea of collaboration and process. EVA's director, Matt Packer, spoke about the way "the projects we're doing don't have the same exhibitionary imperatives".

There's a definite validity to the conceptual, but art still tends to work best when there's something to look at. In this instance, the installations at Limerick City Gallery and Ormston House were most rewarding.

So what was worth seeing in 2025? These are our favourites.

**Lisa Fingleton: *The Square Tomato***  
Siamsa Tíre, Tralee, Co Kerry, February-March  
Referencing "advances" in bioengineering aimed at making fruit and veg easier to pack, the artist, grower and writer Lisa Fingleton jumped into a series of serious meditations on how much we're screwing up the natural world in the name of progress. What made this show a standout was the wit with which Fingleton leavened her messaging, and the breadth of her sources. Her filmed interview with the Indian physicist and environmentalist Vandana Shiva also provided a sliver of hope.

Other highlight works in this vein included Bernadette Kieley's *No Promised Land* painting at the RHA Annual, and John Conneely and Conor Maloney's *Funeral for Ashes* at the Festival Printworks Gallery for Galway International Arts Festival (although four times was probably plenty for David Mach, who again made the main Galway festival installation, exuberant and eye catching as it was).

## Kunstkammer

Lismore Castle Arts, Waterford, March-October

The art of the past is knowable only through what has survived, which means the collections of the wealthy tend to underlie taste and an understanding of what art "ought" to look like. So where better to explore than a castle?

Robert O'Byrne's witty and idiosyncratic curation was the ideal foil for a dive into collections old and new. Kunstkammer, at Lismore Castle Arts, featured eclectic objects and furniture, plus works by artists such as *Monster* Chetwynd, Sarah Lucas, Dorothy Cross, Sasha Sykes and John Gerrard. Takeaways included: even the nobility could do with a bit of decluttering; and while we may all try to understand and hold the world through owning and ordering, it still remains remarkably, enduringly elusive.

## Mainie Jellett and Evie Hone:

### *The Art of Friendship*

National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin, April-August  
Giving the lie to the idea that Ireland in the 1920s was a benighted place, where women were relegated to kitchens (with the odd spot of crossroads dancing), and all art looked like a Paul Henry, the National Gallery's in-depth exhibition of the work of two pioneering Irish modernists was revelatory.

Drawing on lessons from tutors in

Europe, Mainie Jellett and Evie Hone made abstraction their own, and within their works the shapes and shades of Ireland sang as if seen for the first time.

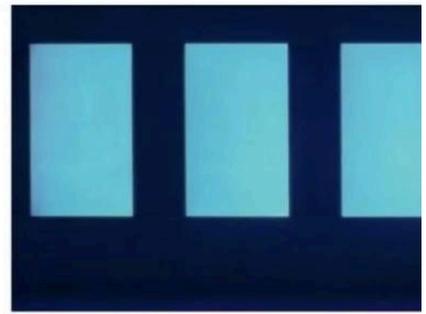
Jellett was selected to represent Ireland at the Olympics, back when art depicting sports was a thing, and her murals were on the world's stage at the Glasgow Empire Exhibition in 1938. Likewise, Hone's stained glass was commissioned for the 1939 New York World's Fair, while her large *East Window* illuminates the dreams of youthful future British prime ministers in the chapel of Eton College. Where did it all go wrong?

## Julianknxx: *Chorus in Rememory of Flight*

Model Arts Centre, Sligo, April-June

All art communicates, but some of the most powerful work this year was about communication – or, more aptly, about the art of listening well. "If we don't unlearn racism," Julian Knox quoted, during the installation of his quietly phenomenal exhibition at the Model, in Sligo, "we might miss the love of our lives." He was echoing a contributor to his exhibition's central film, in which the artist travelled to European port cities, where he connected with black residents.

The unfolding global story told of the movement of people, trade, slave trade, settlement and plunder, as well as community and art. To watch the film unfold, as sequences shimmered with joy, was to open yourself to the huge potential of humanity.





Clockwise from above left: from JulianKxxx's Chorus in Rememory of Flight, at the Model; part of Ireland's pavilion at the Venice biennale; from Agata Stoinska's series Echoes of a Dream, at Archipelago; Achill Horses, by Mainie Jellett; and Kunstammer, at Lismore Castle. Photographs: Ewa Herzog; Ste Murray; National Gallery of Ireland

Racism and hatred shut down the opportunity to fully experience love, not only for others but also for ourselves.

**Cotter & Naessens Architects: Assembly**  
Venice Architecture Biennale, Italy, May 18th–November 23rd  
It has been a landmark year for Irish architects on the international stage. Heneghan Peng's vast Grand Egyptian Museum finally opened in Cairo; and O'Donnell + Tuomey were this year's recipients of the RIAI Gandon Medal for lifetime achievement, at the same time as their master plan for London's new Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, including their outposts of the V&A and Sadler's Wells, has come on stream.

In a patchy Venice Architecture Biennale, with its chaotic and disappointing central exhibition curated by Carlo Ratti, Ireland's pavilion, by Louise Cotter and Luke Naessens, stood out for its clarity of concept as well as form. The pavilion, which will tour Ireland in 2026, including to Cork Midsummer Festival, gracefully amplifies the simple, wise idea of sitting down and talking to one another.

**Michael Kane: Works on Paper**  
Taylor Galleries, Dublin, May–June  
From co-founding Project Arts Centre to creating powerful art, Michael Kane was a central figure in contemporary Irish culture. The works in his exhibition at Taylor

Galleries were made to a smaller scale, but this only intensified his rich images. Part abstraction, part almost-recognisable people and places from his stamping ground in the area around Pembroke Road in Dublin, they exuded a quietly seductive power. "It is the ghost of the city that is behind the actual city," he said.

Kane, who also had work in simultaneous group exhibitions at Hillsboro Fine Art and the Irish Museum of Modern Art, died on the eve of the Taylor opening, three days shy of his 90th birthday. His fellow artist Cecily Brennan wrote, on behalf of Aosdána, that "in many ways, this is what artists dream of, not only being able to work until the end, but to be able to make better and better work until the end".

**Jenny Brady: The Glass Booth/An Both Gloine**  
Project Arts Centre, Dublin, July–October  
Exploring the worlds of interpretation and communication, Jenny Brady's first solo show in Ireland was a reminder of why this Irish artist has such a significant international career. From opening scenes of the Geneva summit between Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet leader, and Ronald Reagan, the US president, in 1985, the film went on to the experiences of interpreters in training, all the way to a Nato interpreter, wryly commenting that "sometimes we're used like a fuse", blamed, he noted, "when a speaker is aware of having gone too far".

The most emotional sequences were those focusing on the children of immigrant families, thrown into an adult world as they attempted to interpret and navigate for their parents. A compelling and thought-provoking watch.

**Ella Bertilsson, Kathy Tynan and Emily Waszak: Faigh Amach**  
Temple Bar Gallery, Dublin, August–September  
Three intriguing artists showcased their very different work at Temple Bar in a new initiative aimed at helping artists launch international careers. A solo show at Southwark Park Galleries, in London, in 2026 was up for grabs, but that proved less interesting than the intricacies of the work. Ella Bertilsson tracked inner worlds with a cool but sparkly eclecticism, and Kathy Tynan's paintings were assured explorations of everyday intimacies. Emily Waszak, the ultimate winner, tracked the rituals of grief through weaving, with a delicacy that found a more recent echo in Cecilia Vicuña's Reverse Migration (at Imma until July 5th, 2026).

**Archipelago**  
Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin, September–December  
Photography had a good year in 2025. PhotoIreland's ambitiously named International Centre for the Image opened in Dublin's Docklands in July, while Photo

Museum Ireland's strong programming continued, including with Maija Tammi's Empathy Machine, which runs until February 1st, 2026. The winners of its Young Photographer Awards were installed in an outdoor exhibition at Wilton Park, and are on view until spring 2026. While smartphones have made photography both ubiquitous and mundane, Archipelago, at the RHA, was evidence of the wealth the medium can achieve. Seventeen artists, including Conor Horgan, Kate Nolan, Fionn McCann, Agata Stoinska and Ruby Wallis, slowed time through the fraction of a second's flash of light on a lens.

**Dublin Gallery Weekend**  
Various venues, November  
After two years in its current incarnation, Dublin Gallery Weekend finally took the obvious step of including the public galleries and institutions, such as Imma, Project, Temple Bar and the Douglas Hyde, alongside their commercial cousins. "Commercial" is a clear misnomer for the labour of love involved in running a gallery funded by sales of contemporary art, but widening the field added to the energy of what had previously been a more niche celebration for those who would probably have gone anyway. If you fall into the category of those who need an extra nudge, this should be it. Ireland's artists survive on the support of galleries, institutions, funders and you. Go, see, fall in love, buy. ●

# THE RADICAL ART OF GROWING

By Lisa Fingleton at The Barna Way, Ballybunion, Co Kerry

*"We are all connected through food. We are all connected through soil. We are all connected through life. And those are the interconnections that we have to build consciously now"*

*~ Dr Vandana Shiva<sup>1</sup>*

For over twenty years, much of my life and arts practice, has been focused on food systems and the increasingly radical acts of growing organic food, saving seeds and planting trees. The word 'radical' originates from the Latin word 'radix', meaning 'root'. I like the idea of getting to the root of complex and interconnected issues in order to achieve the transformation we need to see in our food systems.

My partner Rena Blake and I live at *The Barna Way*, an organic farm and creative hub just outside Ballybunion, Co Kerry. We have tried many things to make the farm sustainable with various degrees of success and failure over the years. On our 19 acres we have planted 10,000 trees through the Native Woodland Scheme.

We grow organic vegetables and manage meadows for wildlife. We are certified with the Irish Organic Association and are members of Talamh Beo. We are also Farming For Nature Ambassadors and this year we joined their REFARM scheme focused on taking biodiversity actions on our farm. We were delighted to create a Lovelochán this summer, a pond created for wild life in the shape of a heart. We didn't expect it to fill until Christmas but there has been so much rain that it was full in just four weeks. In fact we could have filled multiple Lovelocháns!

I generally try to focus on potential solutions rather than getting bogged down in problems. However in recent times I find it hard not to panic about climate change as I trudge across our fields, wellies half submerged in water, thinking about the 120 million people around the world already displaced due to war, famine and climate chaos<sup>2</sup>.



Rena Blake and Lisa Fingleton, Ballybunion Bean Festival, Brilliant Ballybunion 16th August 2025  
Photo Credit: Grainne Toomey 2025



This project inspired us to apply for a second project called *Brilliant Ballybunion* working with local community collaborators to grow food, protect nature and be creative all at the same time. This project, based on our farm has been running for the last two years and has been hugely successful. Instead of selling our vegetables at the local market we were able to show people how to grow food, hire amazing chefs and create experiences for sharing delicious organic food at both on-farm and off-farm events. This has been a fantastic way of adding value to the food and supporting local organic growers.

The project culminated in the *Ballybunion Bean Festival* this August. We had a community launch in May where we shared beans for people to grow in their own homes and schools. Everyone was issued with a bean certificate. Within weeks we had a few requests for death certificates so we had to run Bean Survival Training with Billy Jo O Connor from Leagh Organic Farm.

The whole process was such a simple way of illustrating the challenges of growing food and many people couldn't believe how hard it was to keep one plant alive. Some people only had a few pods to donate to the festival while we grew a few kilos here on the farm. Together we managed to provide 160 meals on the day with practically no food waste (only one half bowl). It was a great example of community co-creation and the power of a wonderful team of Runner Beans. The day included farm walks, music, workshops, talks and film screenings.

In the barn we screened a film I made with Dr Vandana Shiva called *The Radical Art of Living*. Last year Rena and I travelled to her farm in India to take part in a month long Agroecology programme. Navdanya is a biodiversity and conservation farm founded by Dr Shiva in 1987. She is a prolific writer, internationally renowned food activist and environmental thinker.

In her new book *The Nature of Nature*, she stresses the importance of living ecosystems, photosynthesis and soil as natural solutions to climate change and biodiversity loss. In the last line of the book



**Lisa Fingleton, The Future of Farming, 2022, Ink on Fabriano Paper. OPW/State Collection.**

she says "with every seed we sow, every plant we grow, every morsel we eat, we make a choice between degeneration and regeneration<sup>31</sup>". As organic farmers I feel we choose regeneration every day. I believe this choice is radically important at this time, now more than ever.

<sup>1</sup> Shiva, Vandana, *The Radical Art of Living*; Interview with Lisa Fingleton, Video, 20 mins, Navdanya, October 2024

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.unhcr.org/global-trends>

<sup>3</sup> Shiva, Vandana, *The Nature of Nature: The Metabolic Disorder of Climate Change*, Women Unlimited Ink, New Delhi India, 2024, p 160



**Beans, Watercolour on paper, Lisa Fingleton, 2025.**



**Ballybunion Bean Festival, Ink and watercolour on paper, Lisa Fingleton, 2024.**

*Lisa Fingleton is an artist, writer and organic grower based at The Barna Way, an organic farm, creative hub and wildlife sanctuary in Kerry. She is the embedded artist with Brilliant Ballybunion, a co-creative climate action project and Kerry Artist in Residence. Her work is in the National and State Collections. [www.lisafingleton.com](http://www.lisafingleton.com)*

**'50 To Watch' by the Irish Times for 2026, 3rd January 2026**

**<https://www.irishtimes.com/life-style/people/2026/01/03/50-people-to-watch-in-2026-from-film-and-music-to-arts-activism-sport-and-more/>**



We are delighted to be selected as one of the '50 To Watch' by the Irish Times for 2026. Brilliant Ballybunion was named as one of 4 groups to watch this year in the Sustainability category in this article by Joanne Hunt.

Special thanks to Creative Ireland and the amazing team of people who have come together to protect nature, grow food and be creative.

Here is the article:

***“Nature, food, creativity - that's Brilliant Ballybunion's recipe for community climate action. The enormity of climate change and biodiversity loss can leave the individual feeling disempowered, but by coming together and acting locally, we can transform how we feel and create change, the group believes. Brilliant Ballybunion began with a call out to the north Kerry community for those passionate about nature, food or creativity to collaborate.***

***Nature-lovers, farmers, bird watchers, photographers, sketchers, writers and ecologists came forward and so began a journey of creative climate action.***

***Outputs so far include the Ballybunion Nature Group, a 60-strong collective that has carried out a survey of the Ringed Plover, a tiny ground-nesting bird in decline in the area. The group protects nests and talks to walkers about the importance of keeping dogs on lead. Journaling and sketching helps collaborators to record and process what they are seeing, and inspire action.***

***"If we don't know the names of the birds, the trees or the animals, how will we know when they are gone," says artist and grower Lisa Fingleton. "If our eyes are not open to nature, we just don't see the loss."***

# 50 to watch

## Sustainability

By Joanne Hunt

### Brilliant Ballybunion

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### Alicia Mateos-Cárdenas

Sustainability leader

Winning a global award at the World Chamber Congress last year was a career highlight for Dr Alicia Mateos-Cárdenas, sustainability lead for Cork Chamber of Commerce. She leads the Chamber’s collaboration with Cork City Council on a “Local Green Deal”, a model that unites business, government and civic partners through formally signed agreements that include measurable sustainability targets, clear timelines and shared accountability.

“Our model is not just Cork’s success

organic farming, Brian Meredith hasn’t looked back. Returning from New Zealand to farm with his dad Keith, the pair run a fully organic suckler beef farm near Strabally, Co Laois. Planting diverse forage plants, such as grasses, clover and herbs has enhanced soil health and biodiversity, increased quality silage yields and reduced chemical nitrogen fertiliser by 100 per cent over three years. Planting new whitethorn hedging, broadleaf native and heirloom apple trees have further enhanced biodiversity.

“The biggest change has probably been mindset,” says Meredith, whose farm has been recognised by Teagasc for its progress in lightening the load of farming on the environment. Meredith wants to break down barriers with consumers – “that idea of, ‘I’ll produce the food, you stay outside the gate’ – I don’t like that,” he says. He hosts farm walks and through Social

