



The Arts Council of Northern Ireland Local Government Challenge Fund

Case study: Mid Ulster District Council

Project Title: Seamus Heaney HomePlace

Total ACNI Local Government Challenge Fund award: £150,000 over 12 months

Project description:

Seamus Heaney HomePlace, set in the heart of Bellaghy, will open on 29 September 2016. This project received a total investment of £150,000 through the Arts Council of Northern Ireland's Local Government Challenge Fund and is an excellent example of place-making through the arts within a rural setting with a firm focus on regeneration and the promotion of social cohesion. The Seamus Heaney HomePlace will stand at the heart Bellaghy surrounded by the people which so inspired the late poet and Nobel Laureate, and will have national and international significance.

The new building is over 2,000M² and key elements will include an interactive exhibition using the latest touch screen, video and audio technology, a 160-seat theatre and performance space, learning zones for children and adults and a separate community space. The facility also includes additional rooms that can be used for meetings and other learning activities.

Through the creation of the new Seamus Heaney HomePlace, Mid Ulster District Council has created a flagship facility that significantly enhances the contribution of and opportunities for the culture and arts sector that helps grow and rebalance the local economy of the region.

Anthony Tohill, Chief Executive, Mid Ulster District Council, commented;

“As a Council, Mid Ulster is committed to supporting the arts, most visibly through this latest major investment in Seamus Heaney HomePlace. We believe the arts have an important contribution to make to the growth and strength of this region, socially and economically. The match funding which we have received through the Challenge Fund will allow us to enhance the range and reach of activities across all our cultural venues and programmes, including HomePlace.

As a response to new community planning responsibilities, the Challenge Fund is to be welcomed and the Arts Council congratulated for developing an approach which will support the kinds of tangible, positive outcomes for local people which community planning is intended to embody.”

The facility will include a purpose built theatre space which will be used for a variety of purposes including poetry recitals, music as well as speech and small scale drama that will appeal to a local, national and international audience base.

www.seamusheaneyhome.com