

# A CREATIVE CHARTER



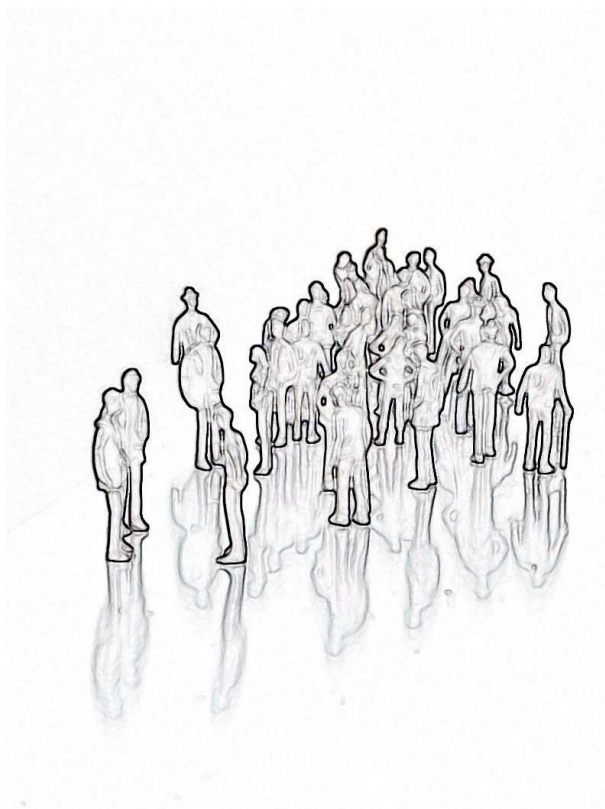


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ABOUT THE ARTISTS  
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ABOUT ANAM BEO  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

"Having actively been part of arts & health with socially driven practices since 2005, as artists the learning for us is to recognise when to step away to give the necessary time & opportunity for people to own their processes, projects & artwork.

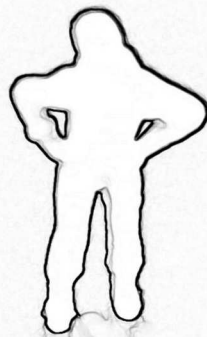
It is not all about the artist but all individual/s involved "

Rowena Keaveny & Julie Spollen



As a society  
we need to  
recognise  
that  
regardless  
of age &  
access to  
participation  
cultural  
resources  
not only  
contribute to  
a live fully  
lived but  
further  
expands the  
quality of  
that life and  
also  
enriches a  
communities  
social  
health.

Rowena  
Keaveny



# A Creative Charter For Older People.



This first draft of a **Creative Charter** for older people was funded by The Community Foundation for Ireland.

It is an articulation of a collective aim to create and advocate arts & culture in community and care settings, for older people with the simple philosophy, “If you design & provide places for creativity & arts engagements, make these spaces work for everybody” Rowena Keaveny and Julie Spollen are artists who work with Anam Beo Arts and Health Organisation.

Generously living together requires an atmosphere of mutual respect. This creative charter is designed to enable an inclusive community to collaborate, both cultural & contemporary art & design practices. Feedback with, and by the community for the community.

There is a need to create new markers that reflect our present culture, to inspire others in the future in the same way that we can enjoy the legacy of our past. Culture is always a response to circumstance, location, history and landscape and its values should leave tangible marks.

Yet not all outcomes are about a tangible product but are an ambition for living generously together.

The complimentary frameworks of situated cognition and experiential process led arts practices are the essence of creative endeavours and personal contexts. Exceptional, unique & creative artwork is being produced through creative & artistic sessions where confidence grows over time with an increased ability which allows participants to be expressive with a voice.

FORWARD

This Creative Charter was funded by The Community Foundation for Ireland. Their support has been vital in allowing us to produce this draft for best practice using the community and their knowledge as a resource within the context of advocacy for arts & creativity & social health.

Working together to create great arts experiences for everyone.

We believe the arts encompass a diversity of human experiences in a variety of forms, enhancing quality of life and contributing directly to building cohesive communities.

**Sustainable communities** need cultural engagement & artistic thinking in tandem with ownership. Engagement through collaborative processes ensures that community investment is relevant & informed.

I would like to thank  
The Community  
Foundation for Ireland  
& all those involved  
for their enthusiasm  
in accommodating  
this evolving work.

Julie Spollen BDes NCAD, MA RCA.  
Anam Beo Artists Projects & Creative

# INTRODUCTION

The Charter has evolved from a previous health literacy project, '*Got it?*' also supported by the Community Foundation for Ireland in which the lack of access to cultural opportunities and spaces was identified as a specific barrier to meaningful social inclusion within the Midland region.

*This document has been developed by the Anam Beo programme in Offaly which is partnered with the Dublin Mid - Leinster HSE & supported by Offaly County Council Arts Office. It is intended that this charter will provide a framework of understanding & become a useful resource for artists, participants, interested parties & relevant bodies.*

*'What  
can we  
do about  
it?'*

*'No-one  
wants to  
know.'*

*'There's  
nothing  
for older  
people.'*

Working with older people we've discovered the belief that advocacy is confined to areas such as health or social welfare rights.

Although a lack of cultural engagement is identified as a specific area of exclusion.

*It hasn't been regarded as an area of life experience that is possible to advocate about. The charter has sought to address this identified need and support older people throughout the county in building confidence in their own active advocacy for social health & meaningful participation in the arts through cultural engagement.*

Developed through a process of ongoing *consultation* with active age groups county wide, people in residential & day health care settings & key staff;

The Irish Wheelchair Association;

Active Retirement Ireland;

Men & Women's Sheds;

Birr Mental Health Centre;

Offaly Public Participation

Network; The Older Peoples

Network; Anam Beo artists &

facilitators; health professionals;

an Arts Officer & arts in health

administrators, the Creative

Charter has explored how the arts

may be used as a tool to advocate

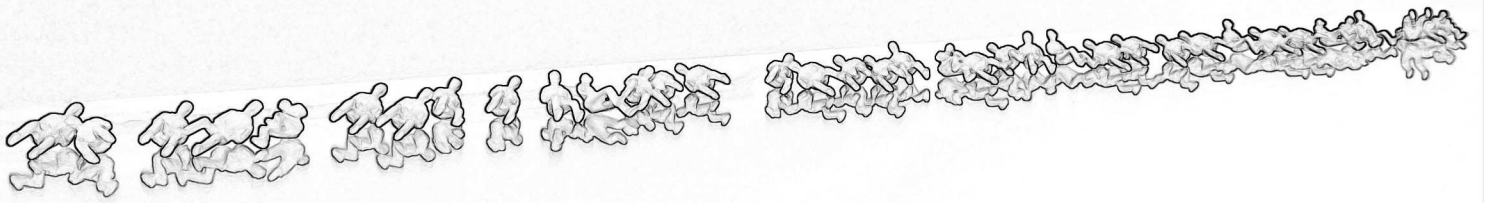
for inclusion and social health for

and from the older *community*.

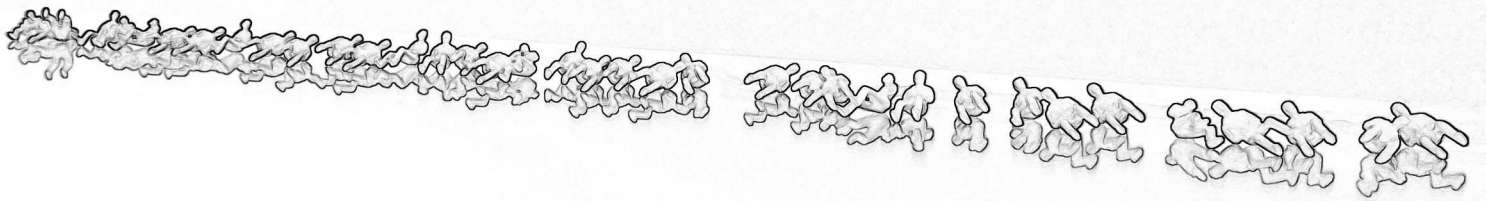
The dual process of Creative engagements combined with a series of public consultations has addressed the previously identified necessity of tactical *placemaking* locally. It also communicates the benefits of arts advocacy, connecting policy development with the Local Authority, stakeholders and diverse networks, supporting the delivery of an inclusive, advocacy based response to future cultural engagement, planning and development in the midland region.

Arts in Health is a continuously evolving field of innovative arts practices within a social health context, taking place in hospitals, respite & rehabilitation, community & care settings. The practice of Arts in Health is a skilful partnership of people who work together in their key roles to facilitate the *participants* in creative activities that aim to empower individuals and our wider community.

Rowena Keaveny  
Anam Beo Artist MA Ath MIACAT







Anam Beo artists facilitate arts inclusion with the delivery of collaborative projects in care & community settings. An arts organisation that encourages self activations, research & development & empowerment through meaningful engagements with contemporary arts practices.

## OBJECTIVES

To always recognise the creative potential within the individual & community.

To challenge perceptions of older people.

To involve Anam Beo participants from HSE centres & members of our community in an Artists in Community programme with contemporary arts practices & events.

Demonstrate collaborative, socially alert arts practices, durational specific activisms with an evolving artists collective, initiating dynamic spaces for reflective artistic outcomes with, in & for our community.

To enhance the quality of life within the healthcare environment, ensuring a secure space for art sessions, assisted by the centre & key staff.

Anam Beo envisage that these collaborations explore, encourage & promote community empowerment & expression.

To document participants artwork & evaluate the projects.

To exchange knowledge, expertise & ideas with participants, artists, peers, partners & relevant bodies.

To be progressive, define, share & promote best practice of process led art sessions.

To network, provide training & support for artists.

To continuously evaluate & update our programme.

To demonstrate through best practice the benefits of local partnership projects & further develop links with institutions & organisations, e.g. Helium, Waterford Healing Arts Trust, The Irish Wheelchair Association, IMMA & contemporary artists.

Initiate **conversations**, critical thinking & **voice** the benefits arts & culture **play!**

# Anam Beo's Programme will endeavour to...

Maintain supports & develop a **creative environment** where artists & participants have the opportunity to engage in **collaborative** & contemporary arts practices.

Subject to funding where resources may become limited, maximise the use of resources and prioritise in the best interests of the participants and the programme.

Ensure **artists** are **professional, trained** and **mentored** when **working with older people & communities.**

**M a i n t a i n  
g o o d  
communication**  
**Ensure** that  
management &  
**staff** at care  
centres are an  
**integral**  
part of the  
**projects &**  
programme.

People are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect and also have a duty of care to treat others with **dignity & respect**, independent of age, culture, physical & mental health, gender, race, nationality, sexual orientation, disability & socio-economic background.

Discourage bullying / harassment by objecting to inappropriate behaviour as it is not acceptable.

Use Anam Beo **guidelines** as a support for best practices as regards to participants & governance.

Network & promote arts in health collaborations through engagement, feedback and conversations that contribute to the research & development of best practice.

**Ensure respectful use of community or private workspaces and the public realm & other places.**

L i s t e n

L e a r n

E n j o y

y o u r s e l f

M a k e t h e

b e s t o f i t .

E N V I S A G E . . .

# In support of creating collaborative arts engagements...

Facilitating artists & staff  
will endeavour to:

Respect people as members of  
a creative & collaborative community.

Provide person centred engagement.

Support participants to explore their potential  
and respect their decisions.

Evaluate art projects and  
processes via feedback.

Engage & actively listen.

Ensure that concerns and  
issues are addressed.

Be respectful to others and maintain  
a dignified environment.

To actively seek informed consent  
in the use of a persons image.

Consult with family/care givers  
in relation to the capacity  
to consent to the use persons  
image or art that they create.

## Participants will endeavour to:

Be part of collaborative activities to develop creatively with art engagements.

Be respectful to others and maintain a dignified environment.

Ask for support and guidance when needed.

To inform facilitators if they do not wish or consent to the use of their image or artwork.

Give feedback.

## Interested parties will endeavour to:

Ensure that older people are aware of, have access to and are able to make the most of opportunities to interact and engage in all aspects of cultural community life.

Represent older peoples programmes and appropriately communicate best practices and supports.

Ensure that all involved are fully consulted if programme supports/necessities change.

Ensure that any issues are addressed as soon as possible.

Be conscious of the necessity and the capacity of consent in the use a persons image or art that they create.

Anticipates and responds flexibly to ageing related needs and preferences which aims to make sure that as we age, we have a real say in what happens in our own lives and importantly what happens in the areas in which we live.

# In support of cultural community life & generously living together...

Facilitating artists & staff  
will endeavour to:

Provide relevant information for diverse communities.

Developing & managing relevant creative practices.

Seek guidance & professionals to  
create a supportive environment.

Participate in training opportunities when available and  
promote a community spirit of inclusion & kindness.

Monitor accessible spaces where safety and health are  
priorities and where energy, skill sets and other  
resources are optimised and purposeful.

Provide access to technical resources based on need.

Ensure all policies/procedures are reviewed regularly.

Promotes the inclusion of older people & values  
their contribution to community life.



## Participants will endeavour to:

Be conscious of fellow participants & spaces.

Promote a community spirit of inclusion & kindness.

Tell artist or staff when you encounter a problem.

Plan ahead for availability of technical resources.

Give feedback.

## Interested parties will endeavour to:

Consult older people in the development of policy specific to arts & cultural engagement.

Communicate with key people in resolving disputes and disagreements.

Enhance cultural life through supporting best practice.

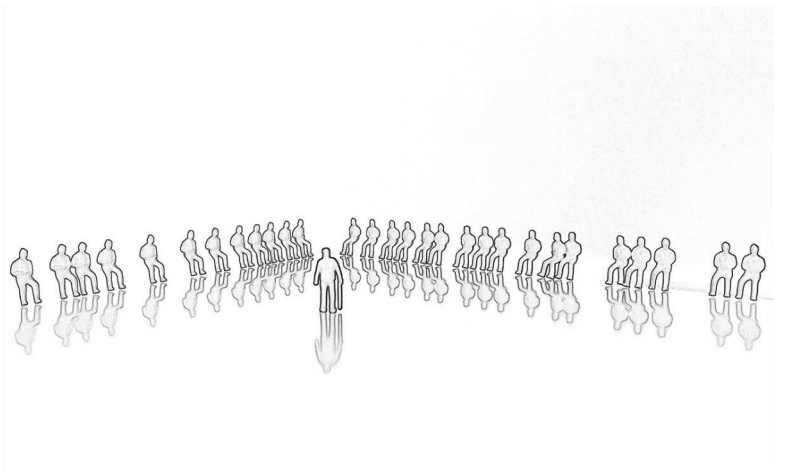
Develop opportunities to engage in a diverse range of arts and cultural experiences.

Contribute to making our community a better place to live and engage in creativity.

To be ambitious and positive about the potential of collaborations.

Use of community noticeboards, websites and information outlets to provide appropriate information about local services and events happening in the area.





## R o w e n a   K e a v e n y

Rowena is a visual/digital artist, arts in health facilitator & Art Psychotherapist. Her work uses digital media, photography, animation and socially engaged practice to explore the diverse issues surrounding social inclusion, disability and access to cultural participation by marginalised groups. Rowena recently completed the first part of a two part commission from Tallaght Community Arts, 'Crust: Because We Have the Right to Earn One' working with the DoubleTAKE supported studio. Through portraiture, vigil and a short film, Crust explored disability, employment & the right to dream.

She has been a recipient of bursaries from The Community Foundation of Ireland and also in collaboration with artist, Julie Spollen, The Ireland Funds, The Arts and Disability Ireland Awards (The Arts Council + The Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Tyrone Guthrie Award (Offaly County Council), The Arts Council, Artist in the Community Award (Create + The Arts Council). Her work is in public and private collections including Laois County Council, Offaly County Council, The Dublin- Mid Leinster H.S.E, Áras an Uachtaráin + O.P.W

As an Art Psychotherapist Rowena has a special research interest in the use of technology in the form of digital narrative to facilitate an understanding of individual experience, its impact and as an additional tool to aid self discovery and recovery.

Rowena's article, 'Navigating Grief: Using digital narrative as a therapeutic intervention in Art Therapy' was published in the Irish Association of Creative Arts Therapists Journal. (Vol 5/No 1: 2018 was the first article on the use of technology in Art Therapy to be published in Ireland.

*"Confronting social inclusion fully, requires that as a society, we look beyond the usual tenets of politics and economics and include cultural exclusion and engagement as being at least of equal importance."*

# J u l i e   S p o l l e n

Julie works in community and care settings in Offaly. Her socially-alert practice focuses specifically on artistic interactions working with older participants. She practices collaborative critical thinking in art and design contexts in order to enhance living conditions for participants and the wider community. Instigates and nurtures partnerships with an evolving collective of professionals and institutions to advocate for the role of place and placemaking in cultural engagements and environments. She believes that sustainable communities need opportunities for social connections, equity, inclusion & spatial identity.

Julie Spollen holds a B.Des from NCAD and an MA from Royal College of Art. In October 2019 she exhibited Activate in Áras an Chontae, Tullamore, Co. Offaly. Activate investigated place, making public space accessible and inclusive through public seating and the voice of the community in regards to the new Arts Centre in Tullamore, which was unpacked through art workshops, Get Together sessions and this Creative Charter, which was presented to the County Council.

She has most recently worked on participation-focussed projects where she partnered with Offaly County Council, Dublin Mid- Leinster HSE, Anam Beo, Arts in Health Organisation, The Irish Wheelchair Association, Irish Rail, The Midland Regional Hospital, Offaly Public Participation Network, Irish Museum of Modern Arts and Age & Opportunity. She made a creative short film on composer Karen Power's 'Sonic Pollinators' with Quiet Music Ensemble, a project commissioned by Creative Ireland. She has successfully campaigned with others for a purpose built Community Arts Centre for Offaly to enable local contemporary culture. Julie is an advocate for arts that nourish society.

*"It is heartening that Anam Beo exists in the company of people who not only love the arts, but who feel a responsibility to ensure it has an all inclusive nature."*

# About Anam Beo

*" The painting  
passes a  
couple of hours  
otherwise you  
just sit there  
getting  
browned off,  
its boring and  
lonely doing  
nothing "*

*" Given me  
something to  
believe in, was  
good to be in a  
room with a  
person who  
believes in  
you doing  
something that  
keeps your  
brain alive "*

John Beesley

The Arts are a part of our care & community settings & our social health. Anam Beo, Arts, Health & Wellbeing Organisation have a professionally developed & strong method of practice in Offaly. Anam Beo works with professional artists & is a charity and a company limited by guarantee.

This first draft will be updated as we experience and learn new aspects of being part of a small, yet accomplished arts and health organisation and arts practices.

# Anam Beo Values

## Individual & Community Health

### Arts Practices

### Participation

### Collaboration

Each facilitating artist must possess warmth and empathy with respect for the individuals and a trust in the creative and artistic process. Anam Beo directly focuses attention on people within care and community settings to encourage creativity & individual empowerment. By generously living together the artists practices facilitate expression in a safe and socially inclusive environment.

# About The Community Foundation for Ireland

The Community Foundation for Ireland believes in a fair, caring and vibrant Ireland for now and the future. It works with individuals, families, corporates and other trusts and foundations to translate giving in the moment to giving that is strategic and impactful. Responding to Ireland's complex needs by building deep relationships with non-profit organisations working at the coal face. It builds platforms with local communities and collaborates with the public sector. With over 1,800 community foundations globally, the community foundation model is a proven and effective model for social change.

**The Community Foundation for Ireland will be here to support an equitable, thriving and caring society.**

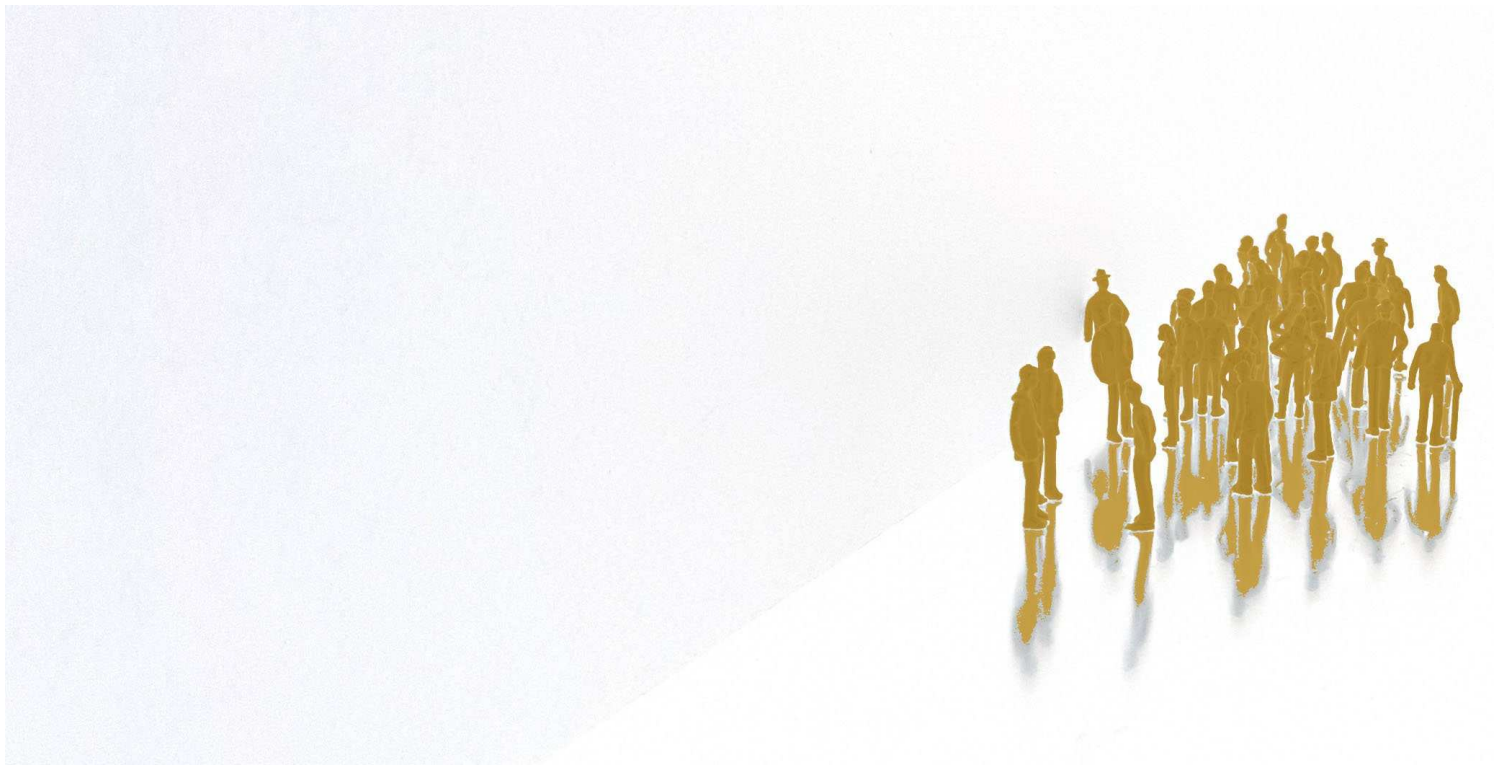
**The Community Foundation for Ireland is one of the largest philanthropic organisations in Ireland.**

**The Community Foundation for Ireland helps people make a difference by inspiring a spirit of giving and by investing in people and solutions to benefit every community.**



" We believe in an Ireland where everyone feels they belong. An Ireland where people are equal and communities thrive. An Ireland where everyone has a voice. We respond to Ireland's complex needs by building deep relationships with non-profit organisations working at the coal face. We build platforms with local communities and collaborate with the public sector. We use our knowledge to help donors translate their giving aspirations into effective investment of their experience and resources. "

" We respond to Ireland's complex needs by building deep relationships with non-profit organisations working at the coal face. We build platforms with local communities and collaborate with the public sector. We use our knowledge to help donors translate their aspirations of giving back into effective investments of their experience and resources. "





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Community Foundation for Ireland  
Anam Beo, Arts & Health Organisation  
Bridie Costello Offaly Public Participation Network  
Offaly Older Persons Network  
Offaly County Council  
Dublin Mid- Leinster HSE Services for Older People  
Urban & Rural Planner Dr. Owen Douglas  
School of Architecture, Planning & Environmental Policy

Special thanks  
to Participants  
& Staff from  
Clara Day Care Centre  
Birr Community & Nursing Unit  
Riada House Community & Nursing Unit  
St Vincent's Community & Nursing Unit  
Ofalia House Community & Nursing Unit  
The Irish Wheelchair Association Ballinagar  
Offaly Disability Equality Network  
Ballycumber, Birr & Crinkle Offaly Active Age Groups

First exhibited & published as a live document October 2019  
[https://www.facebook.com/notes/anam-beo/a-creative-charter/  
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Thank You to everyone who was involved & contributed.  
Charter researched, co authored & designed by Rowena Keaveny & Julie  
Spollen

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