

WELCOME

This year's festival theme is CARE and what a theme! Preparing for this 9th edition made us very aware of the broad care ecosystem in the town but also how much more there is to care than meets the eye: our natural surroundings, the food we eat, the produce we grow, the things we do, are all connected to that large web that constitutes care: relationships, the town we live in, the places we frequent are all imbued with care and it is to highlight and cherish these things that we have picked a broad range of events and presenters: to make us think, to create connection, to celebrate through dance, singing, storytelling and making, to make more visible the work being done behind the scene and its value and importance within our society. Indeed, once we are looking, we can see carers and people who care everywhere! And this makes for a very heartwarming picture! Thank you to all those who help illuminate our town, by supporting Applefest and by showing up everyday, be they funders, sponsors, patrons, committee members, artists, volunteers! And audiences! By doing so, you show that you care!



SHOW THAT YOU CARE

As part of our 2026 programme, Clonmel Applefest have been investigating the care landscape of Clonmel with visual arts and creative writing workshops in a number of community care settings. The project, a collaboration between visual artist and graphic designer Paul Bokslag, writing facilitator and poet Sean O'Connor and Applefest Director Theresia Guschlbauer; aimed to create connection and link the disparate parts of the larger Clonmel care community in its varied and different contexts, bringing carers and service users to the fore, making more visible the work being done behind the scene and its value and importance within our society.



The process culminated in an illustrated publication, which explores the intricacies and dynamics of care, Paul using the wax resist technique to help unveil vibrant images of what it is we care for, and Sean O'Connor's unpacking the theme with a poetic exploration through the Japanese shortforms of Tanka and Haiku.

The exploration was further enhanced by the contribution of nine community writers who took part in a writing masterclass led by Sean O'Connor at which they finetuned their essay and prose editing skills. Their short pieces are included in the *Voices of Clonmel* book to be launched on the opening day of Applefest.



Paul Bokslag is a visual artist, designer and facilitator, based in Callan, Co. Kilkenny. He was a co-founder of KCAT Arts Centre and works with Helium, the national children's arts and health charity. He has exhibited widely, including at the Butler Gallery.

Sean O'Connor is a Tipperary-based writer specialising in Japanese short form poetry. His workshops have received wide acclaim spanning a wide range of subjects. He edited and mentored writers on the 2025 *Families of Clonmel* book.

Participating groups: National Learning Network, Rathkeevan Nursing Home, Marian Court, Corlann (formerly Brothers of Charity)

more info and tickets on www.clonmelapplefest.ie

MUSICIAN IN RESIDENCE

Kate Twohig, composer and choral conductor
For Applefest 2026, Kate proposed a residency centred around the theme of CARE, explored through the lens of VOICE. The voice is one of the first instruments we encounter and one of the most personal. It carries our stories, our relationships, our identities, our histories and our hopes. It can soothe, protest, grieve, celebrate, question, witness and connect.



This residency grows from artistic inquiry and asks what it means to care for ourselves, for one another, for our communities and for our environment. It is interested not only in the voices we hear every day, but also in those that are often overlooked, silenced or left unspoken. Through collective singing, walking, listening, sounding and artistic exploration, participants will be invited to experience voice as a means of connection, expression and shared responsibility.

THREADS OF CARE

Residency at The Circular Square with **Brigid Teehan**. A series of hands-on, inclusive workshops exploring care through textiles, creativity and shared making. Using reclaimed fabrics and simple techniques, participants reflect on caring for ourselves, each other, our memories and our hopes for the future.

Inspired by the People Care ethic of social permaculture, the series explores how small acts of repair and making can strengthen community and contribute to positive social change. As we move from designing for ourselves to creating with and for our communities, we strengthen connection, collaboration and a shared sense of belonging. Through making together, we practise the kind of caring, sustainable society we want to build.

Each workshop can be attended individually, while together they form a creative journey—from personal reflection to collective making and community care.

Workshop dates: Thursdays 10th, 17th, 24th September & Thursday 1st & 8th October: 7-8.30pm



MAP AND VENUES



1. Main Guard
2. Baker's Bar
3. Channon's Forge
4. Library
5. Gashouse Bridge
6. Donoughmore Club
7. Friary Car Park
8. Mulcahy's Pub
9. Linn Gallery
10. The Circular Square
11. Greenane Blueway



Applefest Team

Curator: Theresia Guschlbauer, Marketing: Sybil Cope, Production management: Eoin Hally, Sound: Paul O'Donnell, Graphic Design: Paul Bokslag

Applefest Committee

Ute Brinker, Anne Condon, Lyn Mather, Cait McCormack, Jeanette O'Dwyer, Brid O'Donnell, Carmel Phillips, Elke Wilson

Applefest Board

Annabelle Alvarez (treasurer), Sarah Furno (chair), Theresia Guschlbauer, Brid O'Donnell (secretary), Mairead O'Sullivan, Lyn Mather, Barbara Russell

Clonmel Applefest Sponsors



Partners



Patrons

Hackett's Electrics, Frances O'Hanlon, Cashel Farmhouse Cheeses

Thankyous

Anita and staff at CMD, Jaimie and staff at Tipp Echo, Jon at Lion Print, Dermot Duggan, John D. Kelly, Eamon Lacey at Nationalist, Jaimie & staff at Baker's, Joe Channon, The Apple Farm, the team at Circular Square, Board and committee of Clonmel Applefest and all the volunteers and workers who make the festival possible.



24-27 September 2026



THURSDAY 24 SEPTEMBER

VOICES OF CLONMEL BOOK LAUNCH

2pm | Fetch Café | free

Voices of Clonmel is the 6th book in the people of Clonmel book series, this one following a diverse cohort of people in care settings interspersed with vibrant images and a series of essays and prose pieces by community writers mentored by writer Sean O'Connor. Live music and refreshments will be served.



WELL BEING: A GUIDED WALK ON WELLS

5pm | St-Patrick's Well | € 12

Discover the wondrous magic of ancient wells. Charlotte Emily Rose is the author of *Well-Being*, a book that documents the recently un-earthed water heritage of Kinsale, including one hundred old spring water wells. She will be offering a “well-being” experience as part of Applefest, at which people are invited to gather around Patrick's Well for a talk on the wonders of water and old wells, with a Q and A opportunity and short closing water ritual.

SATURDAY 26 SEPTEMBER

GUIDED WALK TO GLENARY DESERTED VILLAGE

10am | Walk lasts 2 & 1/2 hours | free ticketed event

A guided hike to Glenary's Lost Village with Neil Dennehy and historian Richard Howley from Carey's Castle.

REPAIR CAFÉ & TOY LIBRARY

11.30-1.30pm | The Circular Square | free

STREET ARTS ON THE STREETS

1-4 pm | Under the Arches

2pm and 3.30pm at Friary Car Park | free

Clonmel's town centre is up to some street arts mischief: join Cormac Mohally, juggler extraordinaire and our Bespoke Brass Band for a walkabout show that will 'noise-up' the streets; catch 'Now and Then', a heartwarming story of connection and see what happens when Pookie, a social-media-obsessed-aerial-insta-model and Nancy, a no-nonsense hardy older lady share the same space. The show recounts their generational clash and unlikely friendship, featuring an 8 metre freestanding aerial rig, filled with slapstick comedy and aerial acrobatics.



THREADS OF CARE WITH BRIGID TEEHAN

7-8:30pm | The Circular Square | free

Participants create a small textile artwork that expresses a hope, wish or vision for themselves, their community or the future. Using reclaimed fabrics, stitching, layering and simple embellishment, they explore how creativity can help us imagine positive change. Individual pieces can stand alone or become part of a larger collective artwork.

STORYSLAM: SHOW THAT YOU CARE

doors open 8pm | Bakers Bar | € 12

Enjoy a night of heart-stopping and spell-binding stories around the theme of CARE from first time and experienced storytellers, all sharing a personal story in the warm atmosphere of Bakers backroom bar. Hosted and guided by our very own dramatist extraordinaire and Sunday Miscellany contributor Joe Whelan, eight storytellers share a 6 to 8 minute personal story, some humorous, some life-changing - the raw honesty and candour will take your breath away! With a special interval act, this promises to be a memorable night!



EXHIBITION: THE WEB WE WEAVE

5pm | The Narrow Space | free | exhibition runs until 17 October

Exploring the theme of CARE, artists Anna Hutchinson, Christine Simpson and Brigid Teehan present a collection of work that reflects on our connection to the living world. Through the patient, considerate and quiet dedication of practice, the artists demonstrate how small, intentional acts come together to shape something of beauty and deeply meaningful. Inspired by permaculture principles, this exhibition invites us to slow down, look a little closer, and appreciate the delicate threads that bind us.



HARVEST TRAD HOOLEY

7.30pm | The Railway Bar | € 25

Put on your dancing shoes and whet your appetite for an evening of homely autumn food and lively dancing in the rustic atmosphere of Clonmel's best kept secret, the Railway Bar! Have a taste of our Autumn Stews made with premium Whelan's Butcher beef and local ingredients and finish with apple pie, over the lively sound of Trad fusion trio Megatrad for a bouncy and bold dance set followed by DJ Lorcan's Trad Fusion set. A night of craic, community camaraderie, and good food.

FRIDAY 25 SEPTEMBER

VOICES OF CARE POP UP CHOIR AND WORKSHOP

1pm | Under the Arches, Main Guard | free

Our musician in residence will lead a singing session bringing a musical moment of connection into the everyday life of our town.

THE POWER OF BIRDS: READING AND WORKSHOP

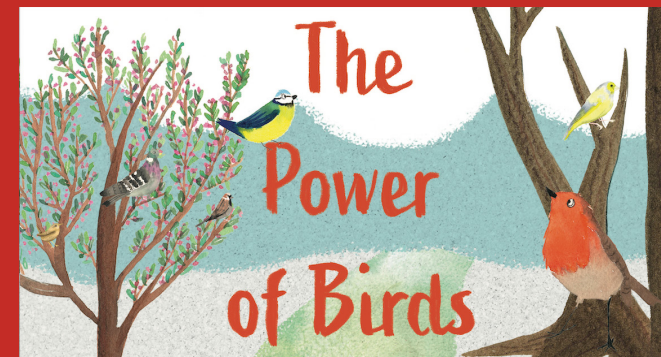
3.30pm | The Circular Square | free

A gathering to celebrate all things birds: Julie Petit's book *The Power of Birds* will be read by our very own Marie Hickey, followed by a bird making workshop with Elke Wilson.

WHISKEY TASTING

5.30pm | the Donoughmore Club | € 25

Jennifer Nickerson, Tipperary Distillery founder will share her business' field-to-bottle approach, growing their own barley, explaining the distillation & maturation process and how this influences the whiskey in the glass. Includes the tasting of 5 distinctive samples and a Q&A session.



SUNDAY 27 SEPTEMBER

VOICE AND BREATH WALK BY THE SUIR

11am | Gashouse Bridge | € 12

Join Musician in Residence Kate Twohig and Maria Dargan of The Yoga Yard for a gentle guided walk along the banks of the River Suir, bringing together the sounds of nature, our human voice and breath. Explore simple breathwork, vocal exercises, chanting and song as we discover how our voices connect us to each other, and to the place we are walking through.

RIVER FIELD DAY

12- 4pm | Greenane Blueway | Convent Bridge | free

Enjoy a day out by the river with our family-friendly Field Day celebrating the river heritage and biodiversity of Clonmel in a creative and fun event. The day will feature Apple picking, pressing and tasting, a children's treasure hunt, craft activities, a boating gala and the 'Bean together' creative youth café devised by young people with artist Aoife Barrett. Bring your own apples and bottles!



THE FOREST MIDWIFE: CATHERINE CLEARY IN CONVERSATION WITH ROZ PURCELL

7.30 pm | Main Guard | € 12

The Forest Midwife is a short cinematic documentary, following the journey of the writer and social entrepreneur Catherine Cleary who bought a barren farm in Corry, Co. Roscommon, and created a nature reserve from the ground up. Following the screening, she will be in conversation with Roz Purcell about her passion for trees, forests and the natural world.

THE ONE NIGHT ONLY CHOIR

7pm | Brewery Bar | Mulcahy's Pub | € 12

Experience the power of collective voice in a welcoming and casual setting, which invites people from across the land to come together for a unique, one-night-only choral experience. Participants will sign up in advance and receive via email, learning materials, inc lyrics, guide vocals and harmony parts. The event involves a welcome and warm up, a rehearsal section and a final recorded performance. No previous singing experience is required. The emphasis is on participation and having fun.

WORLD MUSIC AND JAZZ WITH DJ LORCAN RYAN

9PM | Mulcahy's Pub | free

VOICES OF IRISH FARMERS; A LOVE STORY FILM SCREENING & PANEL DISCUSSION

5pm | Bakers Bar | € 8

What does the future of farming look like? What do we need to do to adapt to a changing world? This film offers an intimate portrait into the lives of three farmers across Ireland, their stories becoming an interconnected narrative as each farmer nourishes their communities and reshapes a landscape for future generations. Followed by a panel discussion featuring local farmers and food business owners, chaired by Dr. Alan Moore.



THE BURNING CAVE

8pm, Channon's Forge, € 12

Our weekend concludes in the atmospheric surrounds of Channon's working Forge. Now in its 4th year, the Burning Cave is Clonmel's version of an Electronic Spoken Word Cabaret, bringing together musicians, poets and performers presenting original and selected material in collaboration with electronic sounds and beats wiz master Eoin Hally. The Burning Cave aims to encourage younger and older generations to experiment and collaborate through performance.