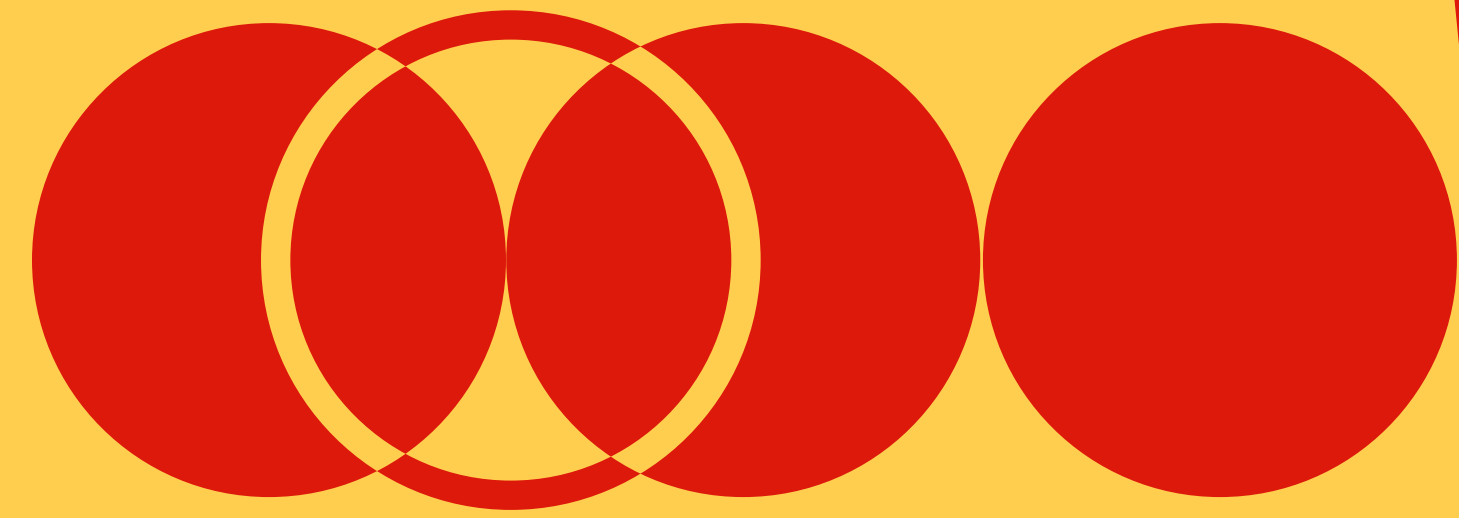


SOUND **ALTERNATIVE**
IS OUR EDGE

DROGHEDA'S 
NIGHT TIME 
 **VISION**

TOWN

DROGHEDA'S NIGHT TIME VISION

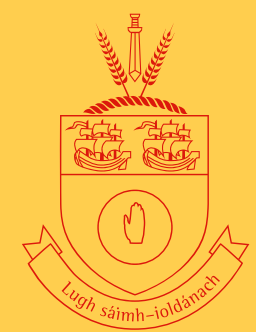


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An Roinn Cultúir,
Cumarsáide agus Spóirt
Department of Culture,
Communications and Sport



Comhairle Contae **Lú**
Louth County Council



ALTERNATIVE

IRELAND'S NIGHTLIFE IS CHANGING.
THAT MATTERS.

IT'S WHERE WE CONNECT.
WHERE WE BELONG.
WHERE WE SHARE OUR BEST MOMENTS



AWAY FROM SCREENS,
AWAY FROM ROUTINES.

IS OUR EDGE

SOUND TOWN'S MESSAGE IS SIMPLE.
BE YOURSELF.
WE'RE EAST COAST.
THERE'S ROOM TO BREATHE.
ROOM TO DO WHAT OTHERS CAN'T.
DON'T COPY. CREATE

BE DIFFERENT
BY DESIGN.

THIS
IS
WHERE
YOU
COME
IN

BE ALTERNATIVE
BE EDGE
BE INDEPENDENT
BE TRUE
BE SOUND
BE TOGETHER
BE DROGHEDA



SHAPE
THE
NIGHT

THE MOON AND STARS

Written by Dagogo Hart

The sky closes its curtains
and we turn on the moonlight
We that scream — Let there be night!
We that answer, the bold and the proud
The moon and the star
Marching across the dusk lit streets

The night sculptors, shaping it into
their image of love, care and courage
The people, re-connecting, belonging,
getting away from screens and routines.
The painters, colouring in the silhouettes
The paint might be new
but the canvas is the same
This town, this home, this fabric
folded seven-fold onto itself
Cannot be broken, each wrinkle
connecting
one end to the other,
from hilltop to valley's edge
Each hand, holding the other,
a thread stretching across the river Boyne,
a lace of embrace
Each person, carrying a backpack full of laughter,
joy and breaths to keep the night alive
The night is alive because the people are

So let us turn the map on its back
and trace a new path
A town for the artists and their art
A place and a face
From the fringest to the unapologetic
Let us build together
Both refuge and monument
Somewhere for us and all
Let us invite our neighbours to dinner
and show them how we make feasts in our streets
How we nurture our seeds.
Let us dare!

Dare to forge the stage
Dare to climb it like a pedestal
Dare to carry the pedestal on our backs
and lift those atop.
This is for us by us to us.
An ode to the difference makers, the shadow weavers,
the night watchers, the try-hards,
the special unique and peculiar,
the status quo shifters and
new world builders.
For you
You that is bold enough to try and crazy enough to believe.
Dare to be the moon and the star



Scan or
Click Me



PURPOSE

This is Sound Town, a vision document that sets direction for Drogheda’s nightlife. It builds on the town’s identity as a daring cultural destination on Ireland’s east coast and presents an approach others can align with. This is a working vision — practical enough to steer decisions, open enough to invite collaboration.

The Sound Town vision belongs to everyone who shapes the night:

PEOPLE

Locals and visitors who bring it to life

CREATORS

Artists, performers and organisers who shape it

BUSINESSES

Venues and services that open their doors

STAFF

The workers who keep it running

PARTNERS

The organisations that shape the big picture

VISION STATEMENT

“Drogheda’s night is shaped by it’s people - Ireland’s east coast alternative. Raw, creative, unmistakably its own. A ground-up scene where music breaks out, artists take risks, and the town’s grit fuels identity. Authentic, affordable, charged with energy, Drogheda is where we share our best moments and build a culture of care.”



DEFINING THE NIGHT

By convention, the evening and night are understood to exist between 6.00pm and 6.00am, bringing together hospitality, retail, sport, events and culture.

In Drogheda we take this a step further: *the night is human*. It's where we connect, belong and create – where we share our best moments, away from screens and routines. It's not just about the dark or neon clichés; it's the people, the places, and the spark between them.

This matters. When nights are strong, towns are strong. A healthy nightlife means safer streets, thriving local businesses and a town where people are proud to belong. When nightlife suffers, the whole town feels it – streets empty, confidence drops, identity fades.

ABOUT A TOWN

Drogheda sits close to Dublin and on the road to Belfast. That position is an opportunity: one or two stops away, easy to reach, good value, unapologetically distinct.

Sound Town is about using identity as advantage. Alternative is our edge. By that we mean left-of-main, made-here culture — independent music and art, small stages with big ideas, zine energy over gloss. It's people-powered: creators, organisers and venues with the imagination and drive to use any space — from side streets and small rooms to towering monuments and a working port — all as a stage, bringing world-class to local places.

Sound Town isn't about one sound or scene. Trad by firelight can carry it. Strings in a hall, a mural under streetlight, spoken word on the mic, a canvas that provokes. Different forms, same ground-up spirit — unafraid to test the edges. The whole town is a canvas. It's a scene you join, not just watch — and it's the character we will build from.

INSPIRATIONS

Sound Town takes inspiration from places that reimagined themselves beside bigger neighbours — communities that turned proximity into possibility. Bushwick turned Brooklyn's old warehouses into New York's DIY frontier; Brighton became London's creative escape, confident in its difference and Bray, just south of Dublin, rebuilt itself as a cultural outpost by backing its makers and reclaiming its coast.

Drogheda will do the same in its own way — further north, more ground-up, more raw. A working-town remix of those ideas: music in the side streets, art in the old spaces, and a night culture built by the people who live it.



OUR APPROACH

Destinations thrive when they carve their own path. Sound Town’s case is simple: double down on what others aren’t doing and make Drogheda’s character unmistakable. Our neighbours have their edge — and we want them to succeed. Ours will be different and based on Drogheda’s own identity; that difference is the strength running through this vision.



WHAT IT MEANS

WE SUPPORT THE PERSON, NOT JUST THE PRODUCTION

WE PUT ART AND EXPERIMENTATION AT THE CENTRE

WE BUILD CARE INTO HOW THE NIGHT WORKS - FROM THE DOOR TO THE WAY HOME

WE LEARN, SHARE AND IMPROVE AS WE GO

WHAT IT GIVES US

A CLEAR EDGE
A DESTINATION SCENE;
WE COMPLEMENT, NOT COMPETE;
A SHORT TRIP FROM DUBLIN,
GOOD VALUE, WORTH THE TRIP

PEOPLE-MADE, ART-LED NIGHTS THAT FEEL REAL AND CLOSE TO HOME

BELONGING AND SAFETY
WELCOMING SPACES WHERE EVERYONE CAN TAKE PART AND GET HOME SAFE



PILLARS

From here, we turn this character into choices and actions on the ground. Three pillars guide how Sound Town will work — Activation, Wellbeing and Insight. Each has its own function but they move together, like parts of the same rhythm.

NIGHTS THAT
DARE

About making things happen — creating the scene, the culture, the draw. It’s how ideas become nights, and how people start to shape the story for themselves.

A CULTURE OF
CARE

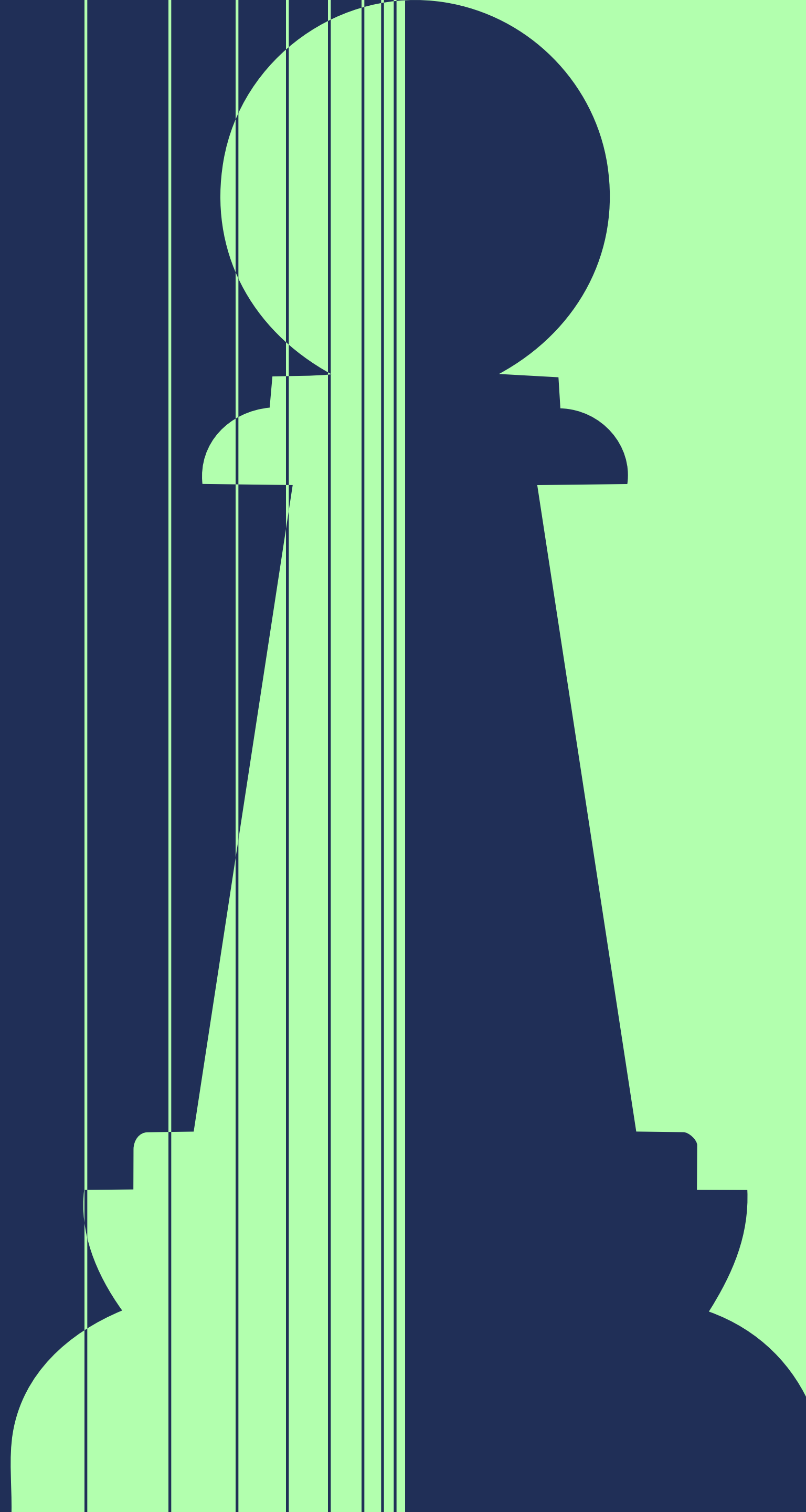
The care, safety and support that make the night sustainable. It keeps the space open, the tone welcoming, and the people looked after.

TRY, LEARN AND
SHARE

Learning at the heart. It’s where we try things, share what works, and use knowledge to make the next more smarter.

ACTIVATION
WELLBEING
INSIGHT

ACTIVATION



Creation lives here. Activation unleashes Drogheda's people — the artists, organisers, and originals — to shape nights that carry the town's true voice.

PRINCIPLES:

People Centred.

Back the person, not just the programme — with advice, mentoring, and real data.

Produce Space.

Find it · protect it · unlock it — the town as a canvas; any place a venue.

Destination Scene.

Historic streets, new voices — alternative, daring, and unmistakably Drogheda; worth the trip.

Grow Audiences.

Nurture loyal crowds — local, curious, and east-coast wide.

Rise Together.

Cross-promote, collaborate, and keep people out longer — every venue an ambassador for the town.

ACTIONS

NIGHT
CURATION
FUND

BACK THE PERSON, NOT
JUST THE PRODUCTION

GRASS
ROOTS VENUE
ALLIANCE

DIFFERENT ROOM, SAME
RHYTHM

NIGHT
MOVES

THE TOWN, A LIVING
CANVAS

HERITAGE
PUB TRAIL

AUTHENTIC,
AFFORDABLE AND
WELCOMING

WORTH
THE TRIP
CAMPAIGN

UNLOCKING THE
POTENTIAL

WHAT IT IS

Delivered by Droichead Arts Centre, an artist lead programme and a nighttime lab for creating and trialling new ideas in new spaces.

HOW IT DELIVERS

Unleashes the power of art to renew the town — creating, testing, and refining new ideas. With success activating cafés, the port and outdoor light works, a regular Night Moves night is redefining how audiences experience their town.

WHAT IT IS

A self-guided trail linking Drogheda’s heritage pubs and historic streets. Available as a simple printed and online guide, it encourages people to explore the town’s character through the spaces that have long shaped its social life.

HOW IT DELIVERS

Revives a pub scene that’s part of Drogheda’s identity — real, affordable, and welcoming. Brings visitors on foot across an historic town, supporting local businesses while celebrating the places that give Drogheda its warmth.

WHAT IT IS

A destination campaign showcasing Drogheda as the east coast’s creative, authentic alternative — close to Dublin but driven by its own pulse and shared story.

HOW IT DELIVERS

Brings together everything Sound Town builds — a creative, authentic scene. Establishes clear routes for visitors from Dublin and beyond, making Drogheda an aspirational place to stay, and explore.

WELTBELONG



We're going to build a shared culture of care — where venues, Gardaí, and the public all play their part in making Drogheda's night safe, welcoming, and connected. We'll move beyond enforcement to collaboration, creating a town where safety and belonging go hand in hand.

PRINCIPLES:

Human Connections First.

Real interactions and shared experiences — the antidote to online isolation; keeping people well and the local economy alive.

Safe Spaces.

Venues and organisers work as partners to create welcoming, accessible, and well-managed environments.

A Culture of Care.

We look out for each other, stay mindful, and check in when needed. We respect those around us and those who look after us. Violence, harassment, and prejudice have no place here.

The Journey Home.

Getting home is part of the plan — later transport options so people feel confident staying out.

Harm Reduction.

People are informed and supported to make healthy choices — go easy, pace themselves, and enjoy the night.

ACTIONS

DROGHEDA
PURPLE FLAG
CHARTER

STRONGER TOGETHER

WHAT IT IS

A shared charter for Drogheda’s night operators — a meaningful way to attract engagement, show pride in the town’s culture of care, and link to extra support and resources.

HOW IT DELIVERS

Equips night operators with real support — safe-guarding training, shared resources, and consultation. Communicates their hard work to the public, tackling perceptions of safety and building trust in Drogheda’s night.

LEAVE A
LIGHT ON

KEEPING THE NIGHT
VIBRANT

WHAT IT IS

A town-wide invitation for businesses to keep one low-energy LED light, lantern, or display on after hours — timed to switch off later in the evening so the town retains a sense of warmth and activity once retail has closed.

HOW IT DELIVERS

Adds light, safety and colour to the streets through small, coordinated acts. A simple, visible sign of care that links business, art and community — helping Drogheda feel alive and welcoming after dark.

ALL RIGHT
ALL NIGHT

LOOK OUT FOR
EACHOTHER

WHAT IT IS

A programme delivering bystander training for 16–24-year-olds — fostering a culture where harmful behaviour in the night becomes unacceptable.

HOW IT DELIVERS

Builds a culture of care from the ground up — making a safe night everyone’s responsibility. Direct workshops and train the trainer delivery, take a long-term approach to challenge harmful behaviour, helping people understand how to respond.

THE
DROGHEDA
CODE

CULTURE OF CARE

WHAT IT IS

A community-written guide to good nights out in Drogheda — setting out the positive, drama-free behaviours locals want to see after dark.

HOW IT DELIVERS

This reinforces what good behaviour looks like — in the public’s own voice. Draws its principles from consultations and local workshops, turning shared values into a lived culture of care after dark.

NIGHT
STEWARDS

VISIBLE CARE ON OUR
STREETS

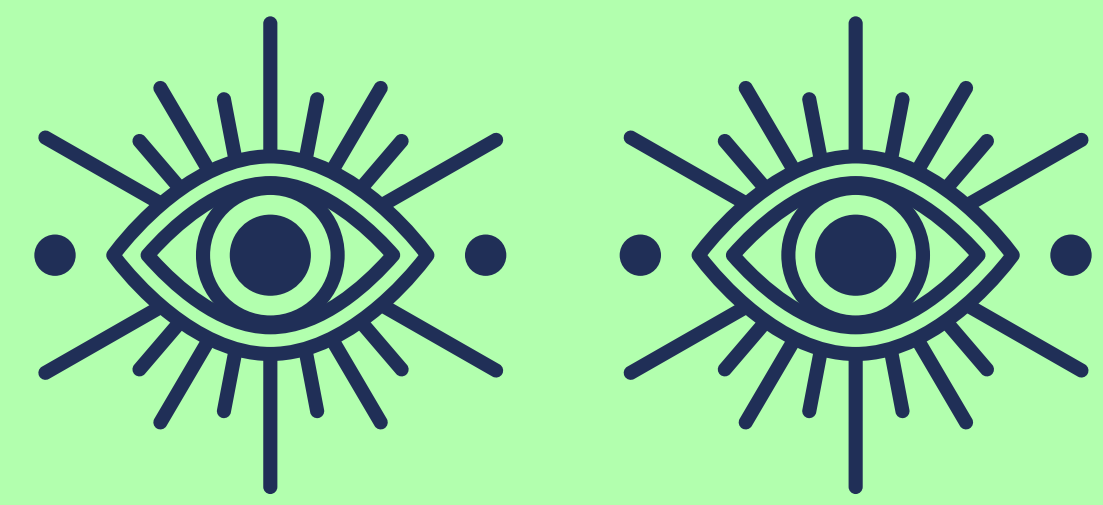
WHAT IT IS

A volunteer presence that helps people feel safe, supported and seen, drawing on proven welfare models offering calm assistance, while staying fully independent of policing or enforcement.

HOW IT DELIVERS

Adds a visible, caring presence to Drogheda’s streets without replacing existing services. The aim is to build trust, reduce tension and create a sense of safety through connection, not authority.

INSIGHT



We’re going to build a clear picture of Drogheda’s night with our partners — learning from what works and sharing it openly. This pillar turns data into direction and experience into guidance for the people making nights happen.

PRINCIPLES:

Open.

We share data and learning freely — insight should flow through the whole scene.

Continuously Learn.

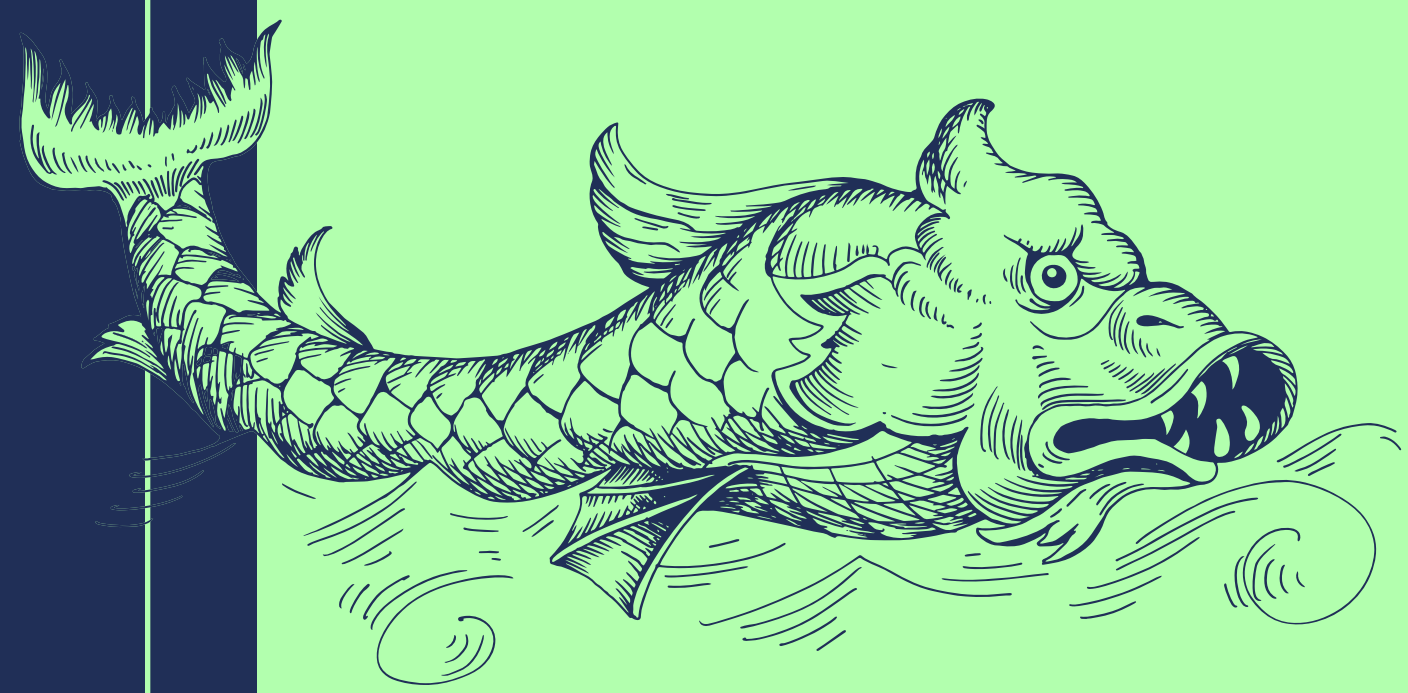
Plan, act, measure, reflect, adapt — using both data and lived experience. Failures teach as much as successes. Innovation. We keep testing new ways to gather, use, and reflect on what we know.

Peer Support.

An open-playbook culture — sharing good practice, mentoring, and working to the same simple principles so we rise together.

Horizon Scanning.

We look outward as well as inward — learning from other scenes and adapting what works to keep Drogheda inventive and ahead.



ACTIONS

SOUND CHECK
APPROACH

MEASURING OUR
PRIORITIES

WHAT IT IS

A shared results-based approach linking event organisers, fund recipients, and the Tourism Office. Collects simple audience data to build a town-wide picture of Drogheda’s reach and activity.

HOW IT DELIVERS

Required for funded events, and supported by Tourism Office and hotel data to measure dwell time. Helps Drogheda measure its growing pull from Dublin and along the Belfast route, guiding smarter, joined-up investment.

THE
JOURNEY
HOME

MAPPING THE LATE
NIGHT PICTURE

WHAT IT IS

A focused survey exploring how people get home after midnight — from lifts and taxis to walking and the 24-hour 101 to Dublin — and the challenges they face along the way.

HOW IT DELIVERS

Builds on the Drogheda by Night survey to give a clearer picture of what happens after midnight. Gathers real evidence to shape better late-night transport, communication, and safety for everyone getting home.

NIGHT
CURATION
PROJECT

TURNING LEARNING
INTO LASTING NIGHTS

WHAT IT IS

A companion to the Night Curation Fund, giving organisers, artists, and venues practical tools, best practice, and data to help their ideas succeed. shaped its social life.

HOW IT DELIVERS

Support shouldn’t stop at funding. Helps creative people plan, promote, and sustain what they start — building skills, sharing lessons, and making every night part of a stronger, self-sustaining scene.

SOUND TOWN
NETWORK

CONNECTING THE
SHAPERS OF THE NIGHT

WHAT IT IS

A series of networking sessions bringing together the people who shape Drogheda after dark — venues, promoters, artists, businesses, and partners — to spark collaboration and shared solutions.

HOW IT DELIVERS

A strong scene needs strong links. The Sound Town Network helps ideas travel faster, builds trust between sectors, and creates the joined-up energy that makes Drogheda’s night greater than the sum of its parts.

NIGHT ECO
SYSTEM
AUDIT

UNDERSTANDING THE
SYSTEM

WHAT IT IS

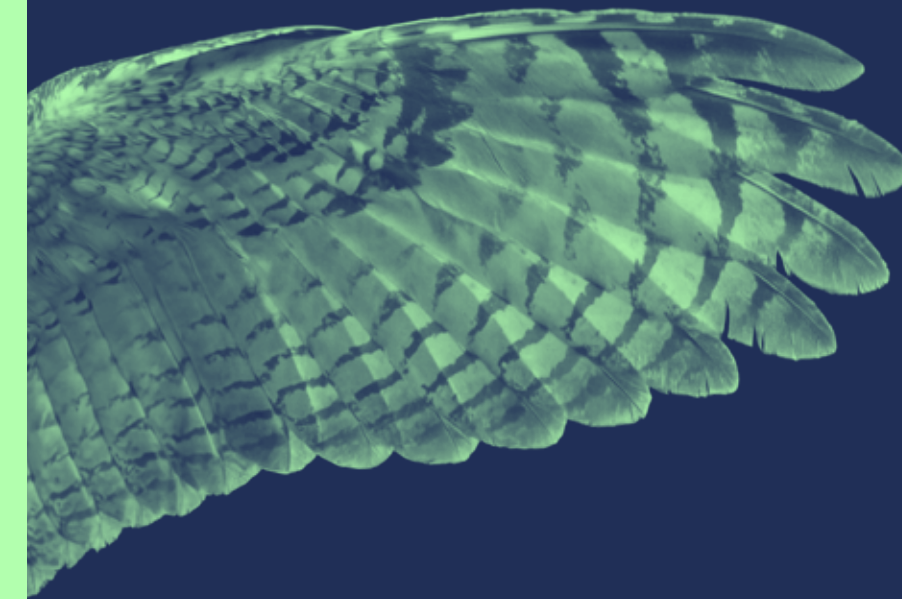
A live digital map of Drogheda’s night — venues, cafés, transport, and late retail — kept current through Google data, consistant audits and community input.

HOW IT DELIVERS

Maps how Drogheda really works after dark — what opens, when, and where people gather. Gives planners and promoters a living tool to track progress, guide funding, and spot new opportunities.



Every town at night tells a story — this is Drogheda's. The future of nightlife in Ireland will be written in towns like ours: creative, alternative, and unapologetically DIY.



Sound Town is not a report to file away — it's a call to be brave, ambitious, and collaborative. From artists and organisers to venues, bar staff, and audiences: if you shape the night, you are part of this vision.

Sound Town is Drogheda at its loudest, proudest, and most alive. A town that knows its roots, shows its edge, and makes its nights as creative as its days.

ALTERNATIVE IS OUR EDGE.

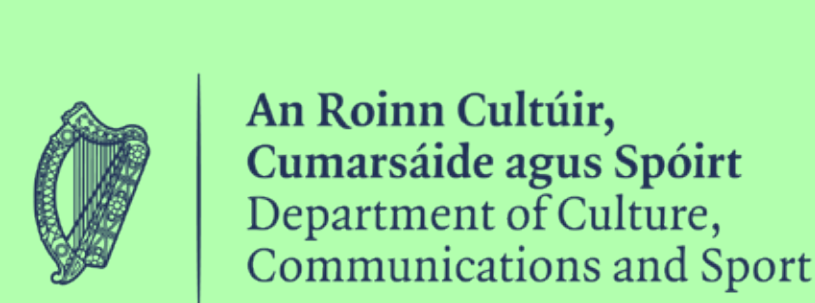
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Sound Town: Drogheda’s Night-Time Vision has been produced through the Night-Time Economy Adviser pilot in Drogheda.

This pilot is funded by the Department of Culture, Communications and Sport, hosted by Louth County Council, and steered locally by the Drogheda Purple Flag partnership.

Drogheda Purple Flag

The Purple Flag is a mark of excellence — like the Blue Flag for beaches — showing Drogheda’s commitment to being a safe, welcoming, and thriving place after dark. The Purple Flag partnership brings together culture, business, and community to make that happen, and it is the steering group for this vision.



KEY PARTNERS INCLUDE:

Louth County Council

Hosting the Night-Time Economy Adviser, leading consultation and policy work, and underpinning this vision with support from teams across departments.

Droichead Arts Centre

Pioneers of night-time culture, activating venues and underused spaces across the town. Special mention to Night Moves, their ground-breaking programme that has transformed Drogheda’s after-dark arts.

Love Drogheda BID

Representing the town’s businesses, driving Purple Flag status, and delivering safety, cultural, and streetscape improvements.

Drogheda & District Chamber of Commerce

The unified voice for local business, fostering enterprise and strengthening Drogheda’s economic landscape.

An Garda Síochána

Supporting safety and wellbeing across the night-time economy.

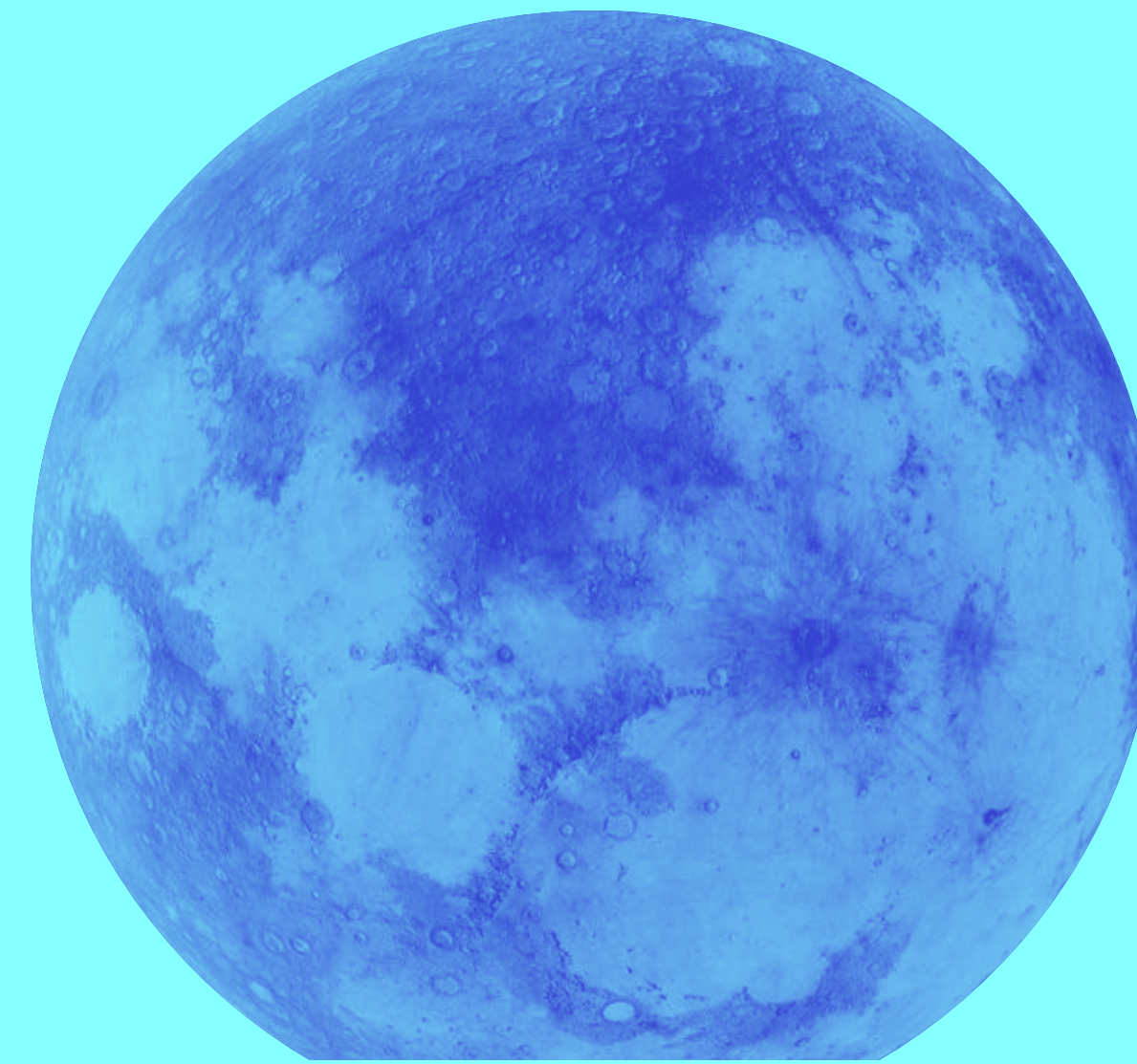
Highlanes Gallery

Bringing world-class to local places, playing a key role in reconnecting people to their town through art and culture.

Special thanks to everyone involved in this partnership. It is the strength of working together that makes this vision real.

THE STORY SO FAR

Sound Town learns from what's already happening and builds on real momentum. This is how a movement is taking hold.



BE ALTERNATIVE BE EDGE

A new alternative creative scene is taking hold in Drogheda — young, independent and growing fast.

Grassroot Promoters

- 11 grassroots promoters backed and delivering regular events.
- OTT Wrestling packing 500 into The Barbican, while All That Glitters Cabaret is pulling 75% of its crowd up from Dublin.

Independent Hubs

- Spaces such as McHugh's, Bigmoon Records and The Kiosk Project driving live music, exhibitions and artist-led activity.
- McHugh's secured a €15k Grassroots Music Venue grant, supercharging original live music in the town.
- The Kiosk Project hosting punk icon Gee Vaucher, signalling Drogheda's cultural vision.
- Odd Mollies reopened to grassroots performers after targeted support from promoter behind hip hop promoter Blas Do Theanga.

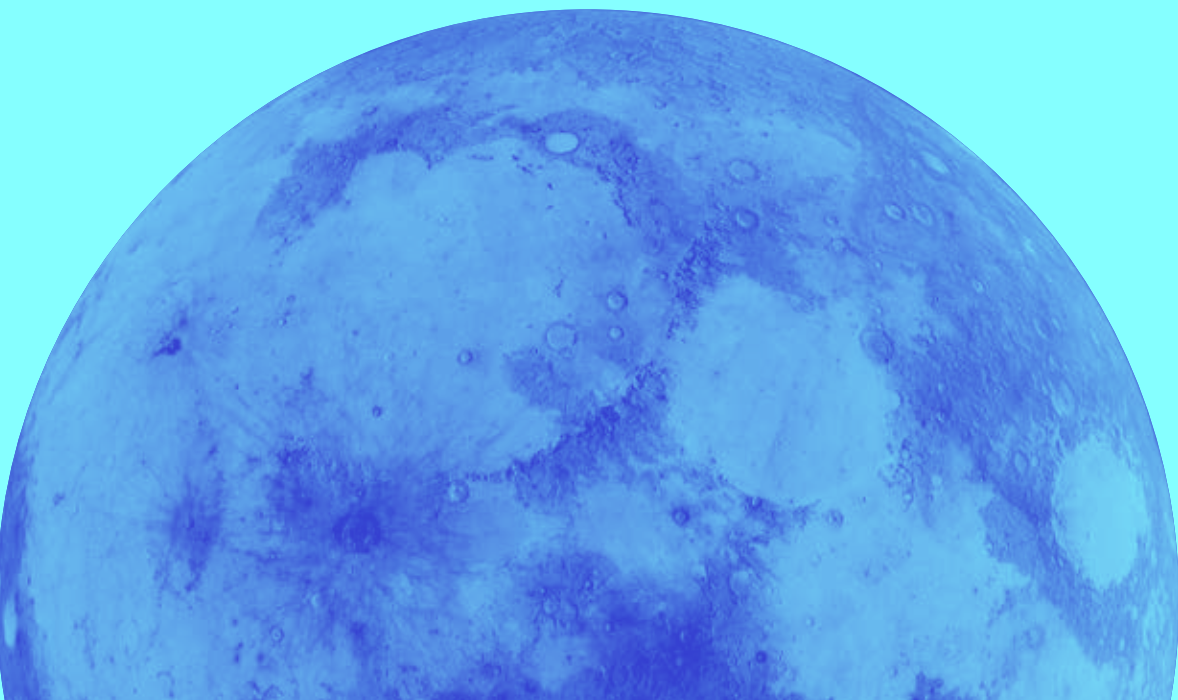
A Scene Defined

- Subvert All Power Vol. 2 launched at Drogheda Zine Fair, capturing the town's alt identity.

Scan or
Click Me



Bands are asking to play here. Creatives are backing each other.
Ireland's East Coast Alternative lives in Drogheda.

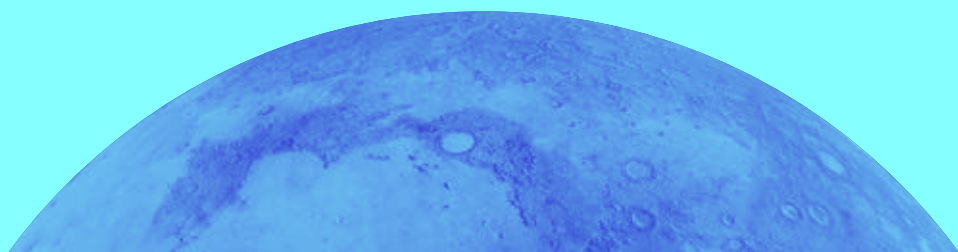


BE INDEPENDENT BE TRUE

Drogheda as a town is finding its own voice independent, collaborative and rooted in culture.

- People Shaped Plan**
 - Drogheda by Night drew 1,238 responses, giving the town a clear mandate for what it wants after dark.
 - Clear support emerging for culture led activity, greater choice and a safe and drama free night.
- A Festival Town**
 - 15 night-time festivals and major events supported — helping place Drogheda on the touring map through moments like Drogheda Comedy Festival (2,000+ tickets).
 - Lú Festival of Light — Led by Love Drogheda BID, a flagship family night-time event with a broader, growing programme. Selected as a Fáilte Ireland Home of Halloween anchor event, strengthened by partners like The Cottage Market and Drogheda Classical Music.
 - National recognition — Led by Droichead Arts Centre, Drogheda was selected as an Arts Council Culture Night Late flagship event in 2025 accompanied by a €16.5k award.

Drogheda has an important innate principle in it's DNA — **bringing world class to local spaces.**



BE SOUND BE TOGETHER

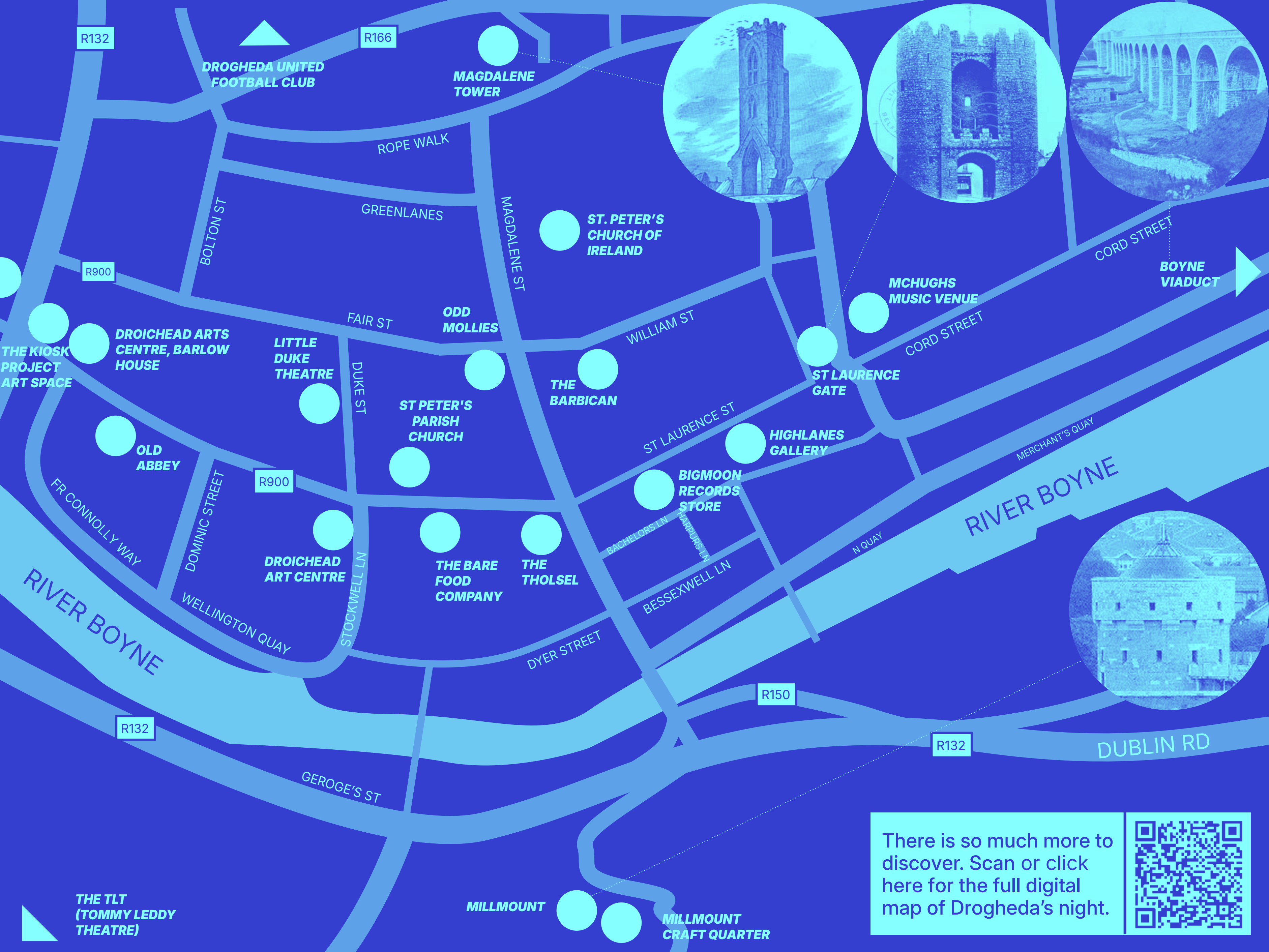
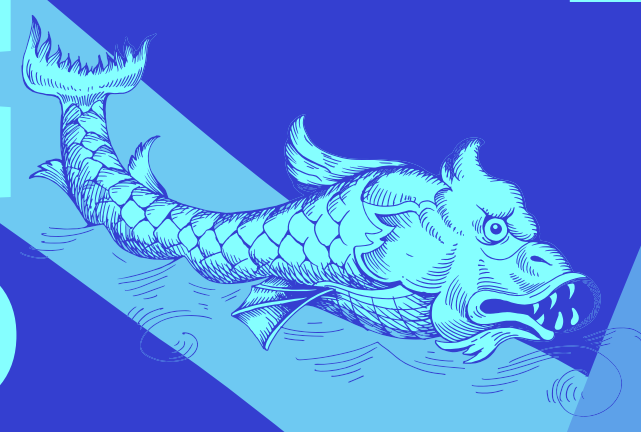
Drogheda's night thrives when people look out for each other and share real experiences.

- Drogheda Purple Flag**
 - The Drogheda Purple Flag partnership is leading a holistic culture of care — public, business and Gardaí working together so every night feels safe, welcoming and inclusive.
 - 29 venues and organisers have signed the Purple Flag Charter, committing to stronger together nights.
 - All Right All Night trained 18 youth workers and volunteers to challenge harassment and support safer, inclusive experiences.
- Night Moves**
 - Droichead Art Centre's night-lab, unlocking new ways for people to connect and bringing them choices.
 - 5 cafes have trialled late openings, sparking some such as The Coffeebox to continue ad hoc events themselves.
 - artist-led light projections on derelict or unused buildings, and mentoring emerging organisers to bring creative energy back to the streets.

In a world pulled toward online living, Drogheda is reminding people what it feels like to belong — together, in real places, away from screens and routines.

This is a grassroots
cultural map of
Drogheda's night,
Ireland's east coast
alternative

SOUND TOWN MAP



There is so much more to
discover. Scan or click
here for the full digital
map of Drogheda's night.



THIS IS WHERE YOU COME IN:
IF YOU'VE GOT AN IDEA
OR A SPACE TO HOST ONE
WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU.

THERE ARE NO LIMITS.
BE THE NEXT PART OF THIS STORY.
BE PART OF SOUND TOWN.

NIGHTTIMEECONOMY@LOUTHCOCO.IE

GETTING
INVOLVED

