**Expect to Connect at Wainfest 2019**

**Press Release**

‘Expect to Connect’ this October as Wainfest, the annual Children’s Arts and Book Festival makes its highly anticipated return. The festival, organised by Donegal County Council's Culture Division, is one of the country’s leading children’s festivals. This year, the week-long festival will run from October 5th – 13th 2019.

Children and their families are invited to join in on the fun and enjoy top quality events on their doorstep such as magic, high energy story-telling, and visits from best-selling children’s authors.

Last year over 11,000 attendees joined us on Wainfest’s ‘wild and wondrous’ adventure.150 events in total were held in 38 different locations, including libraries, Taobh Tíre centres, the County Museum, the Regional Cultural Centre, cinemas and partner locations. With plans for this year’s festival shaping up to be bigger and better than ever, 2019 will undoubtedly exceed last year’s attendee numbers.

Sinéad McLaughlin, Festival Co-ordinator says:

“We are delighted to welcome partners such as Lifford Old Courthouse, Donegal Youth Chamber Orchestra, Glenveagh National Park, Amharclann Ghaoth Dobhair, An Grianán, The Abbey Arts Centre, An Gailéaraí, Inishowen Development Partnership, Oakfield Park, and Eclipse Cinemas back on board for 2019. Their involvement in the Festival adds a wonderful diversity to the programme”.

“Books, reading and literacy are highly profiled in Wainfest” says Sinead. This year we welcome bestselling authors Holly Webb, author of the *‘Animal Magic’* and *‘Maisie Hitchens’* Series, as well as Catherine Doyle, author of ‘The Storm Keeper's Island'. Both aim to encourage young people and children to read by creating interesting and whimsical stories.

Returning from last year’s sell out shows are Mr Hullabaloo, the children’s entertainer and Wildlife expert Éanna Ní Lamhna. New and exciting plans are being made for a kid’s art workshop prior to a screening of Disney’s Ratatouille and even a Smartphone Filmmaking event at the Regional Cultural Centre.

Sinéad is delighted to announce that the 2019 programme has been enhanced with dedicated ASD events across the county. “These events are possible due to funding secured from the Dormant Account Fund. We are currently finalising details for these and all information will be available on Wainfest.ie and in the brochure after the launch in mid-September.”

To keep up to date on Wainfest 2019 visit [www.wainfest.ie](http://www.wainfest.ie) or follow Donegal County Library on Facebook or Twitter.