

**CUSHENDUN
BIG ARTS WEEKEND
MAY 1ST - 4TH**

**4 DAYS OF MUSIC, POETRY,
COMEDY, DANCE, CAKE, ART,
FAMILY FUN IN ONE OF THE
MOST BEAUTIFUL VILLAGES IN
THE GLENS OF ANTRIM**

**EMER MAGUIRE - STRING
QUARTET - NIALL COMER - MUSIC
FOR A MAY EVENING - ART SHOW
- PETTING ZOO - SHARE-A-POEM -
PHOTO COMPETITION**



**For booking and info:
www.theoldchurchcentre.com**

Welcome

Welcome to the **Cushendun Big Arts Weekend 2026**, our annual celebration of arts, heritage and community, now in its 13th year.

We are delighted to present four days of music, comedy, poetry, art, and family fun in one of the most beautiful villages in the Glens of Antrim.

From live performances to guided walks, stimulating talks and family-friendly activities, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

The Big Arts Weekend is made possible through the support of our artists, tireless volunteers, sponsors and community partners.

We extend our thanks to all those who have contributed their time, talent and resources to bring this event to life.

We look forward to seeing you in Cushendun very soon.

Find full info and ticket bookings here www.theoldchurchcentre.com

All Weekend 1-4 May

Local Artist Exhibition at Glenmona

The annual exhibition of paintings by local Glens artists returns to Glenmona House for the Big Arts Weekend. Browse a wonderful variety of local pieces from the Cushendun Painting for Pleasure group.

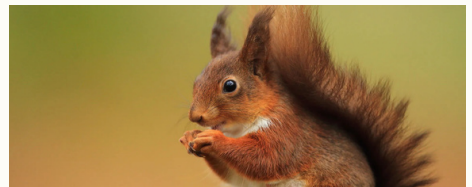
Time: 11am - 4pm Saturday & Sunday

Location: Glenmona House - **Admission £1**

Pop Up Tea Room

Come and taste our range of homemade treats throughout the weekend at Glenmona House on Saturday and Sunday and the Old Church Centre on Monday.

Time: 11am - 2.30pm



Wildlife Photography Exhibition

Photographs selected from open submission, celebrating the wildlife of the Glens of Antrim. See page 6 for information on how to enter. Time: 12noon to 4pm (except during events)

Location: The Old Church Centre - **Free**

Book Sale Table

A wide selection of used hardbacks and paperbacks in good condition, sold to raise funds for the Old Church Centre.

Time: 11am - 3pm all weekend

Location: Glenmona House

Friday 1 May

Stand Up Comedy with Emer Maguire

Emer Maguire is currently one of Northern Ireland's fastest-rising stand-up comedians, known for her unique blend of musical comedy, sharp wit, and storytelling, often focusing on her life as an autistic adult. She has recently sold out major venues including the Belfast Grand Opera House, Ulster Hall, and Mandela Hall.

Time: 8pm

Location: The Old Church Centre

Cost: Early Bird £15 - Standard £17



Saturday 2 May

A Walk in the Woods with Dance Encounters

Join Philip Johnston and Maiden Voyage Dance Company for a walk through magical Cregagh Wood and encounter dance performances en route.

The walk lasts approx 1.5 hours and involves steep climbs and uneven footpaths, so please wear good walking shoes. This event is weather dependent. To check on the day, call Katy on 07932 776107.

Time: 11am

Location: Cregagh Wood. Meet at St Patrick's Church Car Park, Glendun Rd, BT44 0PZ

Cost: Early Bird £6 - Standard £7



John Hewitt Society Lecture on John Hewitt by Niall Comer

Dr Niall Comer is a lecturer in Irish and Translation studies in Ulster University, Magee Campus. He is a native of Newry, Co. Down, but now lives in Glenullin, a rural area located between Dungiven and Garvagh, and has a particular interest in the origin of townland names.

Time: 12pm

Location: The Old Church Centre

Cost: Early Bird £7 - Standard £8



the
John Hewitt
Society

Saturday continues 

Share a Poem

Join us once again at the Old Church Centre for this lovely afternoon of poetry and spoken word. Come along to share favourite poems (of your choice or your own work), or just to listen.

Time: 3pm

Location: The Old Church Centre

Cost: Free



Saturday Night at the Movies

The Greatest Showman follows the rise of visionary entertainer P.T. Barnum as he transforms his humble beginnings into a dazzling spectacle that celebrates imagination, individuality, and ambition. After losing his job, Barnum takes a bold leap to create a unique show featuring performers who have long been overlooked by society. As his circus becomes a sensation, he grapples with the pull between fame and family, ultimately discovering that the greatest success comes from embracing the people who believed in him from the start.

Time: 8pm

Location: The Old Church Centre

Cost: £5 or £4 if you come in costume



Sunday 3 May
Glenmona 11am - 4pm

FAMILY FUN DAY

Most of the events are free but donations are welcome



Naturally North Coast & Glens Artisan Market

The award-winning market is back, showcasing a range of local food, art and handmade crafts. A great opportunity to meet and support artisan producers from the area.

11am - 4pm

Knitting & Crochet Drop-in

Join in crafting 'granny squares' Materials provided, or BYO if you wish. All levels of experience welcome in the Tea Room. 12noon - 3pm **Free**

The National Trust Trail

Have fun and explore nature in Cushendun with the National Trust's 50 Things to Do trail and lawn games **Free**

Local Groups Marquee

Local group representing at the Big Arts Weekend are the Cushendun Anglers, the National Trust and Cushendun's Robert Emmets.

Ballymena Ukulele Group

Back by popular demand, the BUGs bring their joyful and eclectic repertoire to Glenmona, getting the day started with songs and sunshine, whatever the weather.

11am - 12.45pm



Baby & Toddler Disco

Sensory overload for 3-year-olds and under, with contemporary music, dance and colourful lights. Fancy dress optional.

Time: 10 to 11am

Location: The Old Church Centre

Pay at the door £3



Kidz Farm petting zoo and pony rides

Time: 11am - 4pm

Makendoo Drop-in kids' craft workshop

12 noon - 2pm

Sunday 3 May *continued*



Dog Show

Back by popular demand....The Big Arts Weekend Dog Show, featuring a simple Agility Course and Dog Fancy Dress .

Bring your pampered pooch and join in with the fun. Prizes for best dressed and fastest at agility.

Free to enter, all breeds welcome .

Glenmona House 3pm



OPEN MIC

Do you sing or play the spoons, rap or harmonise? Sign up for our Open Mic sessions and take your chance to entertain the Big Arts Weekend visitors. Contact Steve on 07552931378.



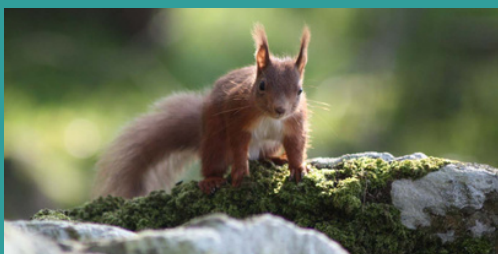
Music for a May Evening with the Ulster String Quartet

Enjoy a varied programme of contemporary and classical arrangements from one of the leading string quartets in Northern Ireland.

Time 7.pm

The Old Church Centre

Cost Early Bird £14 Standard £16



WILDLIFE IN THE GLENS PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION AND EXHIBITION AT THE OLD CHURCH CENTRE CUSHENDUN BIG ARTS WEEKEND 2026

Open submission for anyone resident in the Glens of Antrim area

To enter: Send one photo to photos@theoldchurchcentre.com

Photos need to be high resolution for printing so please choose large or actual size if your e-mail asks for an attachment size.

In the email please include your name, age if under 18, title of the photograph and when and where you took it; photographs must have been taken in the Glens of Antrim. Deadline for photos 19/04/2026.

All photographs submitted will be printed for exhibition 1-10 May.

Prize for best photograph for over 18 category and under 18s category.

www.theoldchurchcentre.com

Monday 4 May



Guided Tour: with red squirrel expert Daniel McAfee.

Join Daniel McAfee, local naturalist, for a walk in Cregagh Wood. The wood is home to an assortment of natural wildlife. Please wear appropriate shoes/boots. Not suitable for prams or dogs.

Time: 10am

Location: Meet at St Patrick's Church Car Park, Glendun Rd, BT44 0PZ

Cost: £5

Sandcastle Competition

Bring your buckets, spades and loads of creativity, and join the annual Cushendun Sandcastle Competition for ages 3-14.

First prize: £20 book token

Time: 10.30

Location: Meet on the Warren opposite Glenmona car park

Cost: Free



Pop Up Tea Room

A special Bank Holiday Big Arts Weekend treat.

Enjoy a selection of delicious home-baked treats served in the cosy surroundings of the Old Church Centre.

Time: 11am to 4 pm

Location: The Old Church Centre



COMEDY QUIZ NIGHT

It's a quiz, folks – but not as you know it! Join us for an evening of quizzing and quiet hilarity hosted by Jaq-in-the-Box Pop-Up Theatre. Play in a team, play on your own (aww, bless) but COME AND PLAY! If you can answer this question you're clever enough to win our fabulous prize: What word is spelt wrongly in every single dictionary?

Time:

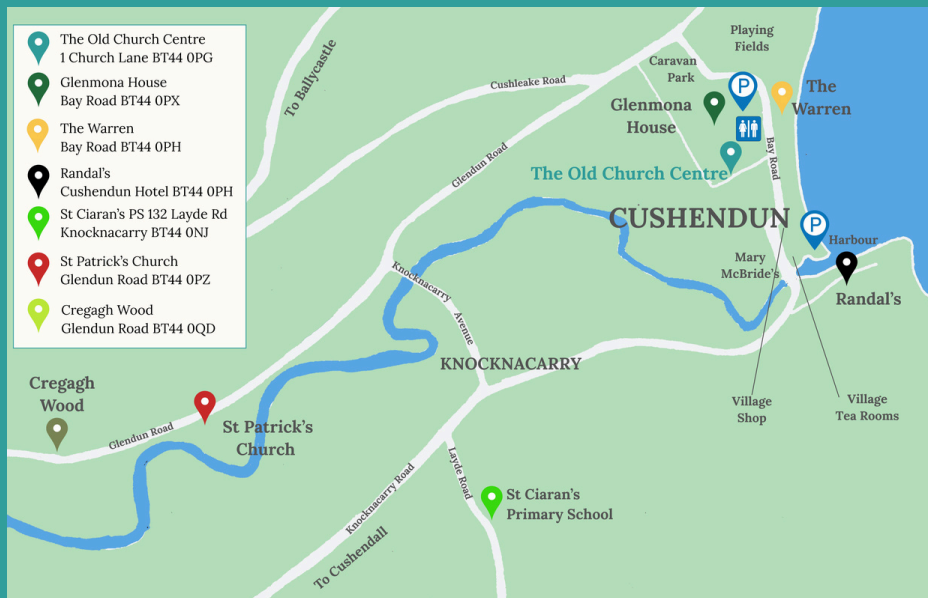
Location: The Old Church Centre

Pay at the door £7



Don't forget to support the work of Cushendun Building Preservation Trust by investing in our famous Big Arts Weekend Raffle. Tickets on sale throughout the weekend.

Where to find us



There is a small car park at the Old Church Centre for those with limited mobility. More space is available in the Bay Road Car Park in front of Glenmona House, or the car park by the Harbour.

A footpath leads from the corner of Main Street directly across to The Old Church Centre.

Support our work

The Big Arts Weekend is organised by Cushendun Building Preservation Trust, based at the Old Church Centre.

We are grateful to individuals, trusts and organisations for supporting us. However, for the Old Church Centre to remain open and active, we need a predictable core of support.

For a small community organisation, every contribution matters. Please consider if you could make a donation.

Regular donors automatically become Members and can have a say in what we do.

Support comes in all shapes and sizes. Your attendance at our events means a lot to us. Please tell your friends, follow us on Facebook and join our mailing list.

We rely on our wonderful volunteers throughout the year and are delighted when new faces join us. Contact us for details.

The Old Church Centre is also available to hire - we do great weddings!

The future of the Old Church Centre relies on people like you!

www.theoldchurchcentre.com