KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL

LIBRARY SERVICE

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Kilkenny County Council Library Service Welcomes President Catherine Connolly to Thomastown Library





Kilkenny County Council Library Service was honoured to welcome An tUachtarán, Catherine Connolly, on Tuesday, 27 October 2026 to visit the newly opened Thomastown Library.

This visit to Kilkenny brought President Connolly one step closer to fulfilling her commitment to visit every county in Ireland during her first year in office and made good on her promise to see towns, parishes, libraries and halls across the country. It marked a very special occasion for Kilkenny Library Service, highlighting the vital role public libraries play in supporting literacy, learning, culture and community engagement. During her visit, President Connolly met with local elected officials, library staff and visitors to this fantastic new facility which has already welcomed over 25,000 people through its doors since opening in May.

She was brought on a tour of the library by County Librarian, Josephine Coyne and Executive Librarian, Johanna Brennan where she learned more about the range of services, programmes and initiatives available for everyone in the library. She was also given a huge welcome from the people of Thomastown and met with several community representatives including members of the Thomastown Scout group, Thomastown Library's weekly knitting group and Thomastown Men's Shed.

President Connolly's visit also coincided with a Halloween-themed floral arranging workshop which was being facilitated by Lynda Jackman, of local florist Petals 'n Blooms, providing much excitement for all in attendance.







The visit was particularly significant for County Kilkenny, providing an opportunity to celebrate the contribution of public libraries to community life through their collections, digital resources, literacy initiatives, educational programmes and cultural events. During the visit, President Connolly and her husband got to experience first-hand the range of activities that take place in a modern, vibrant public library. They took the time to speak to some of the many people who have benefitted from the recent investment in Thomastown Library including families browsing for books in the children's area and Leaving Certificate students and young professionals who were studying and remote working in the dedicated study spaces.





Speaking during the visit, Cathaoirleach of Kilkenny County Council, Cllr. Joe Malone, said: "I was delighted to welcome An tUachtarán Catherine Connolly to Thomastown Library. The library's success, with over 24,000 visitors and 2,100 members since opening in May, reflects the strong support it enjoys within our community. Her visit is a meaningful acknowledgement of the important role libraries play in bringing people together and supporting lifelong learning."

As a memento of her visit to Kilkenny, County Librarian Josephine Coyne presented President Connolly with a limited edition throw blanket from Cushendale Woolen Mills which, fittingly, was woven with wool from Ireland's only native breed of sheep, the Galway sheep.

Thomastown Library would like to thank President Connolly for taking the time to visit and for her continued support of libraries, reading, culture and lifelong learning throughout Ireland.

