

Curraghmore Estate to host Bluebell Festival



Curraghmore Estate

SERT to benefit from proceeds raised on Sunday, May 3rd

Curraghmore Estate, the seat of Lord Waterford, in association with the South East Radiotherapy Trust (SERT), is to host the first ever, family-themed Curraghmore Bluebell Festival on Sunday, May 3rd.

With the Estate seasonally festooned in thousands of bluebells each May, and with the long-term forecast looking quite good, fingers crossed the many destined to visit the Estate will be in for a wonderful day which all the family can enjoy.

With food stalls, music, dancing and a whole host of other attractions to be hosted in the John Roberts designed courtyard, as well as in the exquisitely maintained gardens to the rear of the Curraghmore House, May 3rd is set to be very a special day.

"I am very, very pleased to be hosting this event," Lord Waterford told The Munster Express. "Jim Long from Portlaoise approached me about holding the event here. Gordon Watson (of SERT) is a good friend of mine and it carried on from there, basically. Gordon has done tremendous work for this charity and once Jim asked me about hosting this festival, I was naturally delighted to be in a position to help."

Gordon Watson was thrilled that the event will support SERT and is to be held "in such a wonderful, historic location".

He added: "It's wonderful for SERT that Lord Waterford is allowing us to use his beautiful home to raise funds to keep going because we rely totally on funds from events such as this to keep us going."

Describing funding at present as "okay, we have a little reserve", Mr Watson said that SERT will need to buy three new vehicles this year "which will take a big whack out of that but if we can make anything at all substantial thanks to the Bluebell Festival, then that will keep us going for a year or more".

Founded in 2005, SERT transports cancer patients who require radiotherapy as part of their cancer treatment, from their home or local community, to radiotherapy centres in both Waterford and Cork, free of charge.

SERT covers a considerable area, taking in Waterford, Kilkenny, South Tipperary, Wexford and Carlow, with an incredible 180 volunteer drivers and co-ordinators, with seven seven-seater minibuses currently supporting the service. The service operates five days a week, 52 weeks a year and during 2014, over 9,000 patient journeys were completed, bringing almost 2000 patients for treatment.

“To have 180 voluntary drivers is quite incredible and it’s testament to the significance of what we do.

“Our drivers get a fantastic buzz out of what they do and I hope the people that come and support us on May 3rd will realise that the money they’ll donate to us here in Curraghmore is going to so worthwhile a cause, and so necessary a cause.”

Meanwhile, Lord Waterford has confirmed that a tea room is being developed in Curraghmore with a view to facilitating additional tourists into the Estate.

It’s hoped that the tea room will be opened within the next two months, and with assistance from Waterford County Council and the Waterford Garden Trail also coming on stream, this largely hidden gem just outside Portlaw might be about to gain some welcome prominence.