

## Olive Keyes

### *Pilates and Wellness Retreats*



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Olive Keyes found that wellness retreats both in Ireland and abroad often placed too much focus on Pilates and yoga, and too little on the light entertainment of exploring local history and culture.

“Pilates should be central to the whole experience, but I want other things too,” she says.

A visit to a retreat in Co. Clare proved an inspiration for Olive and after building her own facility on the grounds of her home in Lecarrow, Co. Roscommon, the Athlone native set about offering her own retreats, which included food, cycling and walking tours of conservation areas to connect visitors to the history and heritage of the local area.

“My business, Ireland’s Heartlands Retreats, is an extension of my primary company, which offers Pilates classes in studio and online. We held our first retreat in Lecarrow in October 2021. Since then we’ve been approached by business owners from abroad who want to work with us for their annual away days,” she says.

“I’ve formed relationships with local businesses who can facilitate accommodation and food. This has enriched the experience for my clients, but my aim is to convert outbuildings for guest accommodation and kitchen facilities.”

Olive sees a growing market for wellness in Ireland and hopes to increase her number of retreats over the next 12 months.

She is delighted with the insights gleaned from her participation in the ACORNS programme, particularly in the areas of financial and social media management, as well as the help in sourcing additional supports through the LEADER scheme, which aids rural communities looking to drive development in their area.

“ACORNS is a brilliant programme that connects you with a network of businesswomen with similar issues and concerns, I can’t recommend it enough” she adds.

***Providing early stage female entrepreneurs, living in rural Ireland, with the knowledge, support and networking opportunities to meet and even exceed their current aspirations.***



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,  
Bia agus Mara  
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Food and the Marine