



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

# Heritage Ireland 2030

A Framework for Heritage

February 2022

Prepared by Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage  
[gov.ie/housing](https://www.gov.ie/housing)



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# Ministerial Forewords

Our heritage envelops us as a nation and defines us as a people. While it is all around us it is not always obvious. That's because it has tangible and intangible qualities. It is at the heart of our cities, towns and villages, our landscapes, our communities and our seas. It is heard in our accents and reflected in our countryside. It supports jobs, it drives our tourism sector, and most importantly, it is part of the very essence of this nation. Through this heritage echoes our past, it speaks too to the present and backdrops our future.



A country that recognises the value of heritage recognises its own true value. The investment we are currently making in protecting our heritage, promoting it, and supporting stakeholders and communities that care for it, is evidence of our commitment to meeting the vision set out in this historic framework.

The very diversity of Ireland's heritage and those now responsible for its protection against many challenges, requires a radical all of Government response. In meeting the Programme for Government commitment to deliver a new national heritage plan, we commit to establishing coherent structures for coordination and engagement, for genuinely listening to concerns, embracing new ways of thinking and putting in place the structures and resources to deliver the vision of this framework.

During an extensive public consultation around the crafting of this strategic framework, the deep and widely held passion for heritage and concerns about its protection became very clear: thousands of submissions were received and hundreds of people attended workshops across the country. There was a robust and honest conversation about heritage and its importance. Many practical ideas were put forward on what must be done to ensure our heritage is protected and valued.

Submissions made compelling calls for a vibrant heritage sector to be supported and for the definition of heritage and the scope of the strategy to be broadened to align with best international practice. Those calls were listened to, and **Heritage Ireland 2030** will connect with initiatives and policies right across government, including those focused on intangible cultural heritage and language, which are an integral part of Ireland's story and future and well-being.

Above all, we want to capitalise on opportunities from heritage in a way that is respectful to diversity, attentive to community, environmentally sustainable, socially progressive and rurally integrative.

It is my great honour to present **Heritage Ireland 2030** to you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. O'Brien', written in a cursive style.

Darragh O'Brien TD  
Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage  
February 2022

# Ministerial Forewords

In Ireland we are immersed in heritage. It shapes who we are and our worldview; indeed our built, natural and cultural heritage define us as a nation. Yet it is equally embraced by all who choose to make their home here as well as our global diaspora. It provides a sense of place for communities, it enhances the quality of our lives and contributes to our economy. Our heritage creates and supports jobs, attracts millions of visitors to our shores and provides places of education, wonder and inspiration for our country's future. It also includes biodiversity, which is under ever-increasing threat from land-use practices, climate change and inappropriate development.



Our heritage contributes positively to our wellbeing. Indeed, access to heritage has the power to heal and to improve mental health outcomes. Yet it is subject to all sorts of pressures, largely brought about by our own actions, and often inaction. Protecting nature, preventing the loss of our built heritage and monuments, or salvaging and recording our archives and cultural heritage assets is not and cannot be the sole preserve of the State – it's something we all must play an active role in.

Climate change and biodiversity loss will be a key focus of **Heritage Ireland 2030** over its lifetime. We can use the medium of 'inclusive heritage' to lead a narrative that will bring people and communities along on a journey of change, building on a widely-held appreciation of nature, local heritage and environment. For it is the respect and knowledge of the past, repurposing and the durability of resources, the use of natural earth materials and the awareness that nature is our first line of defence for everything, that will – and indeed should be – the driver of this great change.

The value of things is sometimes not fully appreciated until it is lost and the loss of amenity and access to our national parks, monuments, nature reserves and historic properties was keenly felt during recent public health restrictions. It is ever more important that heritage is supported to ensure that the people of Ireland continue to benefit from the value and wellbeing that it provides.

The right of everyone to engage with heritage is recognised within the strategy, putting citizens and communities at the centre of how Ireland's heritage is managed for a sustainable future.

**Heritage Ireland 2030** is built around a vision for Ireland's heritage, in all its forms – built, natural, cultural, linguistic, tangible and intangible – being at the very centre of local and national discourse, government, education, community and enterprise, valued by all and cared for and protected for future generations.

Thanks are owed to so many who gave their time and ideas in shaping **Heritage Ireland 2030** and its vision. The shared hope is to see real benefits for all as we work together to achieve this vision.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Malcolm Noonan" followed by a horizontal line.

Malcolm Noonan TD  
Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform  
February 2022

# Executive Summary

**Heritage Ireland 2030** celebrates the diversity of Ireland's heritage and the value placed on it by so many. It recognises the fundamental importance of heritage to our society, well-being and economy.

Against the backdrop of increasing challenges, including those stemming from land-use change, climate change, biodiversity loss and dereliction, **Heritage Ireland 2030** is a framework for the protection, conservation, promotion and management of Ireland's heritage for the next decade and beyond.

A very wide range of individuals, organisations, community groups and government partners have helped frame the vision, objectives and actions of **Heritage Ireland 2030**. One of the framework's key aims is to ensure that this extensive network of heritage partners is able to assist in driving forward delivery of the framework over the next decade and beyond.

The ambition has been to create a shared set of goals as expressed through three themes and specific objectives, supported by an Action Plan.

An outline of the Vision for **Heritage Ireland 2030** is followed by a short account of the process of developing the framework, highlighting the partnership approach which was adopted. A chapter on Heritage in Context summarises the role and value of heritage and the partnerships which support it.

The objectives of **Heritage Ireland 2030** are set out under three themes. They are a clear statement of where we need to be by 2030 to ensure that our heritage, of which we are merely the custodians, is in as good a condition as it can be for future generations.

The implementation of the framework is then outlined, with detail of the structures critical to its delivery. **Heritage Ireland 2030** will be delivered through an integrated implementation and oversight structure which will ensure regular interrogation of objectives. These objectives are to be realised through an **Action Plan** which will be reviewed each year over the lifetime of the strategy. The annual review of objectives and actions will be informed by nationwide engagement.



**Heritage Ireland 2030** is by necessity a framework which establishes a process through which further detail will emerge - on priorities, on actions, on timeframes and on stakeholders responsible for delivery. This document cannot define all these from the outset, as to do so would diminish the role of engagement and input by the many who need to be involved in its delivery, and give rise to unrealistic goals and expectations.



# Heritage Ireland 2030 - Vision

The need for **Heritage Ireland 2030** to embrace an encompassing definition of heritage was highlighted through early engagement with key partners and through the public consultation. There were calls for the scope of the strategy to extend to a wide ranging and flexible definition of heritage which aligns with international understanding and best practice.

In response to those compelling calls made in the public consultation, the scope of **Heritage Ireland 2030** has been extended to encompass all aspects of our heritage, building critical connections between natural heritage and biodiversity, and between built and archaeological heritage, both tangible and intangible. This framework embraces the concept of cultural heritage as a group of resources inherited from the past which people identify, independently of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions.

At the heart of **Heritage Ireland 2030** will be the recognition of heritage as a bedrock of Ireland's identity, asserting how important heritage is to all objectives of government and to society generally. **Heritage Ireland 2030** recognises the importance of heritage for its intrinsic value, for economic development, tourism and innovation and the role it plays in individual and societal well-being. The strategy embraces the diversity of heritage in the fabric of Ireland's multicultural society and will support inclusivity and engagement with all communities.



**Recognised for its contribution to society and well-being, Ireland's heritage will be valued, nurtured and protected and placed at the very centre of our decision-making around Ireland's future.**



# Heritage Ireland 2030: Protecting Biodiversity

**Against increasing threats to biodiversity, which ranked so highly in the concerns raised during the public consultation, [Heritage Ireland 2030](#) will support the full implementation of the *National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017–2021* and subsequent plans.**

Biodiversity is the variety of life on earth. It provides us with necessities such as food, medicine, pollination, soil fertility, water regulation and carbon storage; these factors support our economy and our well-being. Yet the very living fabric on which we all depend is being eroded. The 2020 New State of Nature report assessed 85% of European Union (EU)-protected habitats in Ireland as having ‘unfavourable’ status. Over 70% of habitats were reported as being impacted by pressures related to agricultural practices, such as overgrazing, abandonment and pollution. Many species linked with agricultural systems are also declining and there is a legacy of degraded peat habitat systems that struggle to capture and store carbon, regulate water and support biodiversity.

In May 2019, Dáil Éireann declared a climate and biodiversity emergency, recognising the urgency of acting to solve these interconnected crises. The actions outlined in the *National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017–2021* are aimed at improving sustainable agriculture, forestry and fisheries and enhancing conservation measures to protect threatened species and habitats including building on national and EU programmes such as EU LIFE, European Innovation Partnerships, The Peace Plus Programme, the Climate Action Fund and NPWS farm plan schemes.

It is also important that we value our natural assets and recognise the ways in which we depend on them. We need to embed these dependencies at the heart of our policies, plans and actions. This can best be undertaken by applying the natural capital approach, which makes environmental risk and opportunity visible in economic systems.



# Developing Heritage Ireland 2030

As **Heritage Ireland 2030** was developed, the priority was to spark a national conversation about Ireland's heritage and to identify and respond to the issues and ambitions expressed for it.



## Engaging with Stakeholders

Very early engagement with stakeholders informed the consultation process, identifying the priorities of the strategy as well as the key issues, opportunities and challenges being faced. This engagement was critical to the development of the strategy and heritage stakeholders will play a vital role in its delivery.

## Public Consultation

A public consultation document posed a series of questions around three themes: Communities, Leadership and Partnerships. A social-media and national poster campaign launched across local authorities, libraries, museums, heritage centres, universities and cultural institutes invited everyone to *'have your say'*.



**HI2030**

**will be delivered with community engagement and involvement, and through cooperation and partnership**

Over a 4-month period, some 70 public events were held to raise awareness of **Heritage Ireland 2030**. Workshops were held with key heritage partners: the Heritage Council, the Office of Public Works (OPW), the Royal Irish Academy, ICOMOS Ireland and National University of Ireland Galway. Other partners, including the Irish Georgian Society and the Irish Museums Association held dedicated events within their networks. Across local authorities, the Heritage Officer Network led numerous information sessions and regional workshops. These events encouraged local participation and facilitated open and robust conversations about heritage.

### **Submissions**

Hundreds of individuals from every county engaged with the consultation. Many were involved with the heritage and environmental sectors, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), private sector, higher-education institutes, historical and community groups and museums. With the assistance of the Department of Foreign Affairs Global Ireland network, the views of the diaspora were also gauged.

By the end of the consultation process, 2156 submissions had been received, reflecting a huge interest in heritage and concerns about its protection and management. An Information Day in Dublin Castle was held in May 2019 at which the initial findings of the consultation were outlined with opportunity for further discussion. Detailed analysis which was published online has informed the objectives and actions of the framework.

Among the submissions, there were compelling calls for government to do more to enable heritage to create great places to live, work and visit, as well as contribute to the economy, our well-being and the regeneration of communities. Calls were made for improved access to our heritage for all and for better opportunities to enjoy and learn about it.

**HI2030**

**will build the links necessary to ensure that heritage plays its role in contributing to our economy and physical and mental well-being**

Submissions called for a coordinated decade-long framework for heritage and for issues to be addressed urgently. The public consultation stressed the need for adequate resources to be put in place right across the heritage sector in order to protect, conserve and enhance our heritage, contribute to sustainable development and to meet the challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss.

Many submissions demanded that the implementation and oversight of **Heritage Ireland 2030** be collaborative and inclusive. These calls have been acknowledged and are reflected in the proposed delivery structures.







# Heritage Ireland 2030: Addressing the Climate Emergency

Ireland's heritage is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and concern about climate-change impacts ranked very highly in the [Heritage Ireland 2030](#) consultation. Climate change is predicted to accelerate biodiversity loss and degradation. Our monuments and historic buildings, while they have stood for centuries, are not immune from these impacts.

By the end of the century, climate change is likely to have become the most significant driver of biodiversity degradation and loss. Increases in temperature will change the timing of life-cycle events and the distribution of species. The physical impact of more intense storms and increased winter/spring rainfall will accelerate the degradation of habitats that are already compromised by unsustainable practices. Rising temperatures, more frequent extreme weather events and rising sea levels have already placed habitats, species, monuments, historic buildings and landscapes at risk.



Investing in the restoration of natural systems will increase resilience against climate change and will also result in multiple co-benefits, including water regulation, water purification and carbon sequestration. Biodiversity is a frontline defence against climate change and it plays an important role in a sustainable future.

The historic built environment is critical in addressing climate change. Protecting, adapting and reusing historic building stock reduces environmental waste and the carbon-dioxide emissions associated with demolition and reconstruction. Traditional building methods and materials have much to teach us about the skills needed to work with prevailing weather conditions and the use of available local materials. Intangible cultural or 'living' heritage practices are also notable contributors to addressing the climate crisis, working in harmony with nature and alleviating pressure on resources.

As part of the efforts to address the climate crisis the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has prepared sectoral adaptation plans to address the impacts of climate change on Ireland's heritage. Other sectoral plans relevant to heritage, including agriculture and flood relief, have also been developed by other departments. Informed by research and climate-change projections for Ireland and incorporating consultation with experts, stakeholders and the public, these plans set out the measures needed to protect heritage from the impacts of climate change.

**Heritage Ireland 2030 will support the implementation of climate-change sectoral adaptation plans to address biodiversity and the built and archaeological heritage.**

## Heritage in Context

**Our heritage is not just about the past. Heritage contributes to our very sense of identity, resilience, belonging and well-being. It shapes our lives and it is a wellspring of cultural, creative and artistic activity. It is a source of inspiration and hope for the future.**

**Heritage Ireland 2030** will build connections between various heritage strands, built and natural, tangible and intangible, and support a vibrant heritage sector across Ireland to contribute to our society and economy. It will maximize the benefits of transnational cooperation and will harness the collaborative value of an all-island approach. It will support research needed to ensure that the full value of our heritage is known and it will strengthen partnerships to sustain those who care for our heritage.





**HI2030**

**will strengthen the bonds between our tangible and intangible heritage and creativity ensuring that important aspects of identity do not lose their connection to the landscape and people from which they have evolved**

### **The Heritage Sector in Ireland**

Very early engagement with stakeholders informed the consultation process, identifying the priorities of the strategy as well as the key issues, opportunities and challenges being faced. This engagement was critical to the development of the strategy and heritage stakeholders will play a vital role in its delivery.

There is an immense breadth and diversity to Ireland's heritage in all its forms, built and natural, tangible and intangible. Responsibilities rest right across government as well as national and local bodies and engages communities across the country. Local authorities, the Heritage Council, NGOs, communities, businesses, citizens, private property owners, farmers, volunteers, schools, academics and the research sector, professional institutes and campaigners, as well as the private sector, all play important roles in managing and protecting heritage.

Ireland's heritage policy and legislation sits within a broad sweep of international and EU conventions, policy, programmes and legislation. National cultural heritage policy is, in part, guided by various UNESCO Conventions. International recognition of the contribution of heritage to society, economy and the environment, given focus in the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), forms the overall policy context for **Heritage Ireland 2030**. At EU level, a range of programmes, Council commitments, work plans and expert groups influence heritage policy and programmes in Ireland. Ireland's implementation of the 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage was widely recognised for its high levels of project delivery and public engagement. The EU Council of Ministers Conclusions on Risk Management in the Area of Cultural Heritage provide a framework for Member States to work more closely on, inter alia, common mechanisms for risk management, data sharing and the promotion of traditional skills.

The important cross-government role of heritage is acknowledged in the National Planning Framework, Project Ireland 2040 with one of the 10 national strategic outcomes dedicated to 'Enhanced Amenity and Heritage'. It acknowledges the role of heritage as integral and of added value to fundamental priorities. Delivery of the strategic outcomes is aimed at ensuring that cities, towns and villages are attractive and can offer a good quality of life. It includes amenities in rural areas, such as national and forest parks, activity-based tourism and trails such as greenways, blueways and peatways. It demands ongoing investment in well-designed public realm, which includes public spaces, parks and streets, as well as recreational infrastructure. Key to this is integration with our built, cultural and natural heritage, which has intrinsic value in defining the character of urban and rural areas and adding to their attractiveness and sense of place.

In addition to being the lead department on the National Planning Framework, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage advises on heritage matters and works to ensure implementation and enforcement of heritage policies and legislation to meet modern requirements, in compliance with EU and international obligations. Heritage is a critical consideration of the planning and development process and statutory provision is made in the development plan and development consent processes to address heritage impacts. The department has stewardship of the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund which supports more compact and sustainable development through the regeneration of Ireland's cities and towns, with positive outcomes for heritage.

The department works alongside other stakeholders in protecting and promoting greater appreciation and understanding of the intrinsic value of our rich heritage. It promotes heritage as an amenity, as a link for business, tourism and community development and as a means of presenting Ireland as an attractive destination for sustainable inward investment.





The department manages extensive data on Ireland’s heritage on land and at sea, across a broad range of areas – archaeology, architecture, biodiversity, natural and intangible heritage. With different landscapes and areas hosting rare and sometimes threatened habitats, flora and fauna, national parks, reserves, monuments and historic properties embody a sense of place and identity for communities across the land. They are a focal point for locals and tourists to engage with their natural, historic and built environment. They offer a huge variety of unique visitor experiences and contribute significantly to individual and community wellbeing, social inclusion, and economic success.

The department manages a natural-heritage-property portfolio of 87,000 hectares across six national parks and more than eighty nature reserves and other heritage properties, with more than 400 kilometres of trails and walking routes. The department designates, conserves and protects 439 Special Areas of Conservation, 154 Special Protection Areas which comprise the Natura 2000 network and 148 Natural Heritage Areas. The department works with the Office of Public Works (OPW) in caring for some one thousand national monuments in State care and a number of significant historic properties. Through the National Monuments Service and the Built Heritage Policy Unit, the department oversees the identification and mapping of over 160,000 known archaeological sites and monuments across Ireland, protected under national monuments and planning legislation and manages the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

Care of Ireland's two World Heritage Properties is the responsibility of the department, working with the OPW and other key stakeholders including local communities. The department also manages an ongoing process of identifying additional sites for inclusion on the Tentative World Heritage List.

The Heritage Council, as a statutory body funded by the department, has a key role to play in Ireland's heritage sector as a policy advisory body and through its strategic programmes which include National Heritage Week, the Museum Standards Programme for Ireland, Heritage in Schools, and the Irish Walled Towns Network amongst others. The Heritage Council is the line authority for The Discovery Programme and the National Biodiversity Data Centre and administers a number of grants programmes which serve to support heritage protection, community engagement and heritage sectoral support.

Ireland's 31 local authorities are custodians of many heritage resources and are at the frontline in the management and protection of our heritage through the planning system and provision of a wide range of environmental services.

To the fore in these efforts are local authority heritage services who make a crucial contribution, including in community engagement, to the promotion and protection of heritage and culture. Local Authority County/City Heritage Forums and County/City Heritage and Biodiversity Plans are critical to the protection of heritage and engagement of communities in heritage.

Consultation submissions stressed the intrinsic connection between our language and our cultural heritage and **Heritage Ireland 2030** will seek to strengthen these and with other languages now spoken in Irish homes. The Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media has overarching responsibility for implementation of *Straitéis 20 Bliain don Ghaeilge 2010–2030 (The 20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010–2030)*, which promotes a holistic, integrated approach to the Irish language consistent with international best practice. The language-planning process is to be implemented in conjunction with Údarás na Gaeltachta and Foras na Gaeilge.

The Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media also hosts the Creative Ireland culture-based programme in partnership with local authorities, the Heritage Council and others. Under the Creative Ireland Programme heritage represents an important enabling instrument for engaging with issues around social cohesion, wellbeing and economic development.





**HI2030**

**will support the heritage aspects  
of transboundary and international  
cooperation**

Culture Ireland promotes Irish arts and artists abroad and is responsible for Ireland's implementation of the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Implementation of the Convention includes development of the National Inventory of Intangible Heritage, which to date recognizes 30 living heritage practices, with three of these – Uilleann Piping, Hurling, and Irish Harping- also recognized internationally by UNESCO as part of the Intangible Cultural heritage of Humanity. Cruinniú na nÓg, the national day of free creativity for children and young people delivered by the 31 Culture and Creativity Teams, celebrates and showcases heritage-based creativity in every local community.

Ireland's built and natural heritage are drivers of international demand for our tourism sector and Fáilte Ireland has an important role to play in the promotion of Ireland's heritage, providing considerable investment in tourism infrastructure through various strategic partnerships.

**The National Cultural Institutions** and local cultural institutions, archives and libraries are the custodians of invaluable collections of our heritage.

The mission of the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth is to enhance the lives of children, young people, adults, families and communities, recognising diversity and promoting equality of opportunity. Access to heritage and culture have a key role as recognised by the Department which seeks also to ensure that minority ethnicities including Traveller and Roma are also supported.

# Shared Island approach

**So much of our diverse natural, built and cultural heritage pertains across the island of Ireland, so it is essential to work on a cooperative cross-border basis in protecting and promoting our shared island's heritage and biodiversity.**

We will maintain and develop strong all-island partnerships in implementing all aspects of the Heritage Ireland 2030 framework, including by:

- working with the Northern Ireland Executive and through the North South Ministerial Council to develop and deepen our cooperation;
- support heritage through relevant areas under the auspices of the North South Ministerial Council, co-funding and supporting Waterways Ireland and The Loughs Agency as all-island bodies with important remits in the care of heritage;
- maintaining and developing cross-border agency partnerships including through the National Parks and Wildlife Service and National Biodiversity Data Centre; and
- supporting cross-border Local Authority cooperation and all-island civil society initiatives on shared biodiversity and heritage concerns.



Under the revised National Development Plan, the Government set out Shared Island investment objectives for the decade ahead, including to:

- deliver the flagship cross-border Ulster Canal project to restore the all-island inland water system as a premier tourism attraction;
- invest in the built and natural heritage of border regions, recognising their diverse community and cultural traditions;
- conserve cross-border region peatlands; and,
- support more all-island approaches to biodiversity protection building on the success of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.

We will implement these investment objectives working through all-island partnerships, and with resourcing through the Government's Shared Island Fund and other sources, to better protect biodiversity, and to conserve, curate and celebrate our island's diverse heritage in all dimensions.



# Heritage & Well-being

Heritage has positive effects on community well-being, including on social relationships, sense of belonging, pride of place and ownership. Heritage also has positive impacts on individual well-being, enabling increased social connectivity, confidence and life satisfaction. The power of our heritage to contribute to our individual and collective well-being emerged as a strong theme during the [Heritage Ireland 2030](#) consultation.



**HI2030**

will strengthen the policy tools and measures necessary to achieving a truly sustainable society, recognising the importance of heritage to the development and well-being of Ireland

As COVID-19 restrictions eased it was to heritage that people turned for leisure, fresh air, exercise, enjoyment and respite, meeting friends and family at a safe distance. Our parks, nature reserves, historic properties, beaches and hills all provided comfort. And at those times when our access to heritage was restricted, a concerted effort was made by so many across the heritage sector to offer comfort and solace to many by providing digital access to heritage through social media, highlighting discovery and resilience and empowering communities to engage with their local heritage and to experience the joy that such engagement can bring. Our built, natural and cultural heritage became a lifeline to support the nation's health and well-being and, along with our National Heritage Estate, it will play its critical role in supporting communities, rural economy and tourism as Ireland rebuilds.

A growing body of national and international research provides compelling evidence for the kind of positive health benefits described above. Further, targeted, research will provide a greater understanding of the relationship between heritage and wellness and allow us to understand which heritage characteristics contribute most to personal and societal well-being. This research will help us to help more people access heritage and its benefits, to build stronger relationships between people and place, and to demonstrate the public value of heritage.

**Protecting and promoting physical and mental well-being is a public health objective and a responsibility which sits across a range of government departments. [Heritage Ireland 2030](#) will support and harness scientific inquiry in this field to ensure that the role of heritage is recognised, integrated and resourced in policy across Government.**



The OPW's Heritage Services Division is responsible for conserving and presenting national monuments and historic properties. These sites provide a sense of place and history for communities and are integral to our tourism appeal, which Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Ireland work to support as important stakeholders in the promotion of Ireland at home and abroad.

The remit and policies of various other government departments also touch on key areas of heritage. The Department of Environment, Climate and Communications has responsibility for an overall coordinating role in addressing climate change and heritage in coastal areas and offshore. The work of the Marine Institute in advising on Marine Spatial Planning and Seascape Character Assessment is advancing our knowledge of coastal heritage. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and bodies under its remit have a critical role in terms of the protection of heritage across Ireland. It also provides financial support for heritage through its Rural Development Programme which will continue under the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) Strategic Plan. The Department of Rural and Community Development invests in heritage to promote rural and community development and to support vibrant, inclusive and sustainable communities throughout Ireland, including through the Rural and Regional Development Fund.

An Garda Síochána and Revenue are critical partners, enforcing key legislation in the areas of heritage law and in combating heritage crime and the illicit trade of cultural objects.

The Department of Transport, the Electricity Supply Board and Bord na Móna operations all connect with heritage in some way in terms of addressing impacts and conserving heritage. Codes of Practice such as with Transport Infrastructure Ireland have delivered measurable gains in terms of positive heritage outcomes.

The Department of Further and Higher Education, Research Innovation and Science including through the Higher Education Authority, has a key role in supporting third-level institutes and heritage research, including through accountable bodies such as the Irish Research Council and the Royal Irish Academy. It provides apprenticeship support under the Action Plan for Apprenticeship 2021-2025 and the department's Further Education and Training system also meets important skill needs for important heritage activities. The Department of Education has a key role in early heritage education and ensuring Ireland's youth achieve their full potential and contribute to Ireland's social, cultural and economic development.

The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment has a role to support regional enterprise. The Regional Enterprise Plans (REPs) aim to identify growth opportunities, recognise vulnerabilities, and in response, strengthen the regional enterprise ecosystem to enable job creation across various sectors, including tourism in certain regions.

There are many other State bodies with an interest and role in the heritage sector. The higher-education sector, our universities and institutes of technology, and others such as the Royal Irish Academy, and the Heritage Council and the Discovery Programme are centres of research and training in the field of heritage. A very wide range of NGOs is also involved in heritage, archaeology, architecture and natural heritage as well as intangible and cultural-heritage. There is a growing and vibrant commercial community in the heritage sector, supported by professional institutes, who have a key role in the management of heritage. Numerous local and community organisations carry out important heritage work. Charities, heritage groups, local historical societies and clubs, community groups, Tidy Towns Committees, volunteers and private citizens contributed to the thousands of submissions made to the public consultation. Volunteers play an intrinsic role in the sectors from grassroots to national level and make an invaluable contribution to managing and protecting our heritage.



Much of Ireland's heritage is in private ownership. Landowners, farmers and local communities are in many ways the most important stakeholders in heritage protection and we have much to be grateful for in their stewardship of our heritage.

### **The Value of Ireland's Heritage**

Research by the European Commission (2017) shows that in Ireland significance of heritage is rated very highly, recognizing its benefits for ourselves, our communities, our regions and our nation as a whole. We also report great levels of pride in heritage and place a great value on the quality-of-life benefits that access to heritage can bring. Recognising our unique sense of place and sense of identity, while equally respecting the heritage of new communities, lies at the core of [Heritage Ireland 2030](#).



In addition to the intrinsic value of heritage, it also has economic, social, cultural and environmental values. It contributes to jobs, including in heritage skills, construction and tourism. It is an invaluable educational resource. It provides a hub for community regeneration and enhances the quality of our villages, towns and countryside. It anchors a sense of place for communities across the country and for our global diaspora. The social benefits of heritage range from increased social cohesion and a greater sense of community to improved well-being and better health and learning outcomes. The contribution of heritage to physical and mental wellbeing has been thrown into sharp focus by COVID-19 leading to a greater appreciation for its value. It will be important to build on international research and develop Irish studies on the impact of heritage on our health and well-being, and our economy, so as to focus future policy and investment.

Ireland’s living heritage practices are a central expression of the richness and diversity of Ireland’s culture and heritage and provide a means to reach out to our global diaspora as well as being of key interest to visitors. Ireland’s National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage includes the deep and widespread participation in Hurling, our national game; the international recognition of our music – from Uilleann Piping to Irish harping and the traditional Irish music canon; our world renowned traditional skills, such as lace making; recognition of aspects of Traveller heritage such as the language of Cant/Gammon and the skill of Traveller Tinsmithing all have deep intrinsic, social and, frequently, economic value.

Protecting heritage also delivers environmental benefits. It protects resources, reduces waste and carbon-dioxide emissions and maintains the embodied energy of the existing built environment. Our heritage can help meet the challenges of climate change and carbon sequestration and provide the elemental ingredients to protect against further biodiversity loss.



**HI2030**

**will embrace and support existing policies and initiatives and provide further policy backing for the mitigation of climate-change impacts and the protection of biodiversity**

Our heritage is integral to our economy. There is a need for up-to-date research on the value, benefits and impacts of heritage in Ireland, which is one of the key actions of **Heritage Ireland 2030**. Research commissioned by the Heritage Council and published in 2011 estimated a return of investment equivalent to approximately €16 for every €1 invested in the historic environment and that the historic environment supports tens of thousands of jobs. We know that in the intervening years these figures are likely to have varied. Heritage is a key driver of tourism, which is increasingly important to the Irish economy. While 3.4 million visits were made to OPW-managed properties in 2013, this figure rose to 8 million visits in 2018, with millions more visits made to other heritage sites. A 2008 report by Bullock et al estimated the value of ecosystems services in Ireland in terms of their contribution to productive output and human utility to be worth over €2.6 billion per annum.

Our national monuments and properties in the care of the State and local authorities, our national parks and nature reserves are core assets that play a very important role in Ireland's society. These sites provide opportunities for people to improve their physical and mental health, helping to alleviate pressures brought about by increasingly sedentary lifestyles and lack of physical activity. The health benefits of getting active in nature include positive impacts upon mortality associated with insufficient exercise, as well as benefits from reduced obesity and related illnesses associated with inactivity along with positive mental health and well-being benefits.

Digital heritage data is now a significant component of cultural heritage. New technologies bring new tools and resources to assist with heritage protection and access, along with responsibilities for the long term care and preservation of digital born heritage. During COVID-19 when movement was curtailed on public health grounds, many heritage holders focused on bringing heritage to people through their social media platforms. There was a remarkable level of innovation by museums, agencies and the private sector in building engaging heritage projects during a time of great stress for individuals and communities. We know that many were comforted by these.

## Funding

Budgets since 2020 have secured significant additional investment for heritage. This, alongside Investing in Our Culture, Language and Heritage 2018–2027 - which set out a government commitment to capital investment of almost €1.2 billion in Ireland's culture, language and heritage as part of Project Ireland 2040 - provides a solid platform on which to implement **Heritage Ireland 2030** over coming years.



The Government's Shared Island Fund, provides ring-fenced capital funding which can also be programmed for agreed cross-border heritage and biodiversity initiatives.

Funding for heritage, like all sectors, has fluctuated over recent times. There is a strong case for significantly increased levels of investment in our heritage in order to secure it for the future – for its intrinsic value and for its economic value. This includes the imperative for the impacts of climate change and biodiversity loss to be addressed urgently. Although demand for funding is likely always to exceed supply, targeted core funding is critical for building resilience across the sector and will enable the leveraging of other funding streams.

Opportunities may include exploring changes to public financial procedures to allow increasing income from visitors to be reinvested into the care and conservation of our heritage. There are also many funding mechanisms available within the EU. These include the LIFE Programme, the Creative Europe Programme, Horizon Europe and Horizon Europe and EU regional funds such as INTERREG and PEACE PLUS, which support cultural heritage projects as well as Erasmus+. The readiness of the diaspora to engage in philanthropic funding for heritage conservation and presentation is an area for exploration, along with the viability of developing further a Heritage Lottery Fund.



**Heritage Ireland 2030** will support the expansion of available grant programmes and resources to develop a truly sustainable heritage sector.

**Heritage Ireland 2030** will provide support for partnerships at all levels, examining links between government, local authorities, communities, national organisations and higher-education institutions that will make the case for heritage and help the heritage sector as a whole become more resilient and sustainable.

**Heritage Ireland 2030** presents an opportunity to gain a better and clearer understanding of the value of heritage to Ireland and to effect a transformational and sustained level of funding to ensure that our heritage reaches its potential.



# Young People and Heritage

The vision of **Heritage Ireland 2030** can only be achieved by engaging our children and young people in the heritage discourse and by listening and responding to their concerns. Engagement with children and youth was a key objective in developing the strategy. Many of the submissions received through the public consultation were from children and young people calling for action to protect our heritage. A **Heritage Ireland 2030** emoji competition highlighted the passion our children have for heritage in its many forms.

Under the OPW Free Schools Visits programme which has been ongoing for years, 90,462 school children availed of free tours at OPW-managed Heritage sites nationwide in 2019. A range of bespoke schools programmes have been developed at key heritage sites including for example Kilmainham Gaol, Dublin Castle and National Botanic Gardens.

A diverse range of materials are available to download from various OPW websites online. Under the OPW U-12's Go Free initiative which 163,516 children under 12 years of age availed of a free visit to an OPW managed heritage site in 2019.

In addition to the Archaeology in Schools Programme, which aims to deepen understanding and appreciation of this aspect of Ireland's past, the Heritage Council works with young people through its Heritage in Schools Programme to help them understand and appreciate their heritage and, through this appreciation, participate in and contribute meaningfully to society.



Heritage in Schools supports creativity and talent by developing individually tailored programmes that engage young people in protecting, safeguarding and promoting heritage. In 2019, the Heritage in Schools Programme visited 2,500 primary schools across the country and reached 101,700 students.

The scheme provides an additional resource for teachers and supports the stated aims and objectives of the social, scientific and environmental education curriculum where the topics link in with the aims of the scheme. These are:

- To generate greater awareness of, respect for, interest in and appreciation of our heritage among primary-school children by encouraging both teachers and pupils to engage with their local heritage in a hands-on, interactive and meaningful way through place-based learning.
- To encourage learning in the outdoor classroom and to help address the increasing decline in time spent outdoors by Irish children.

Cruinniú na nÓg showcases heritage-based creativity for young people and provides an additional platform to assist in delivery of Heritage Ireland 2030 objectives relating to youth.





**Heritage Ireland 2030** will support the greater participation of our youth in heritage, in line with the objectives of the National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision Making 2015-2020. It will ensure that the voice of children and young people will be embedded in delivering the framework, utilising new technology and ensuring curricular material nurtures their interest. As part of this support, **Heritage Ireland 2030** will ensure the expansion of primary and secondary heritage programmes to fully engage our young people and offer them the learning and opportunities they wish for.



Heritage Ireland 2030

# Themes & Objectives



# Theme 1

## Communities and Heritage



**Local communities have a vital role to play in protecting heritage. As enshrined in the Faro Convention, communities are at the frontline in caring for, enjoying and sharing those things that are special about their places, their history and local traditions.**

## Objectives:

1. Enhance support for local authorities, County/City Heritage Forums and the Heritage Council, and others working in community heritage engagement
2. Improve the involvement of young people in understanding, caring for and celebrating their heritage and biodiversity
3. Enhance recognition and support for the owners of heritage assets and for key work by communities, volunteers and individual practitioners in preserving Ireland's heritage
4. Support research into the health and well-being outcomes of engagement with heritage
5. Increase levels of long-term sustained public engagement with heritage across the country including supporting initiatives such as National Heritage Week, World Wetlands Day and National Biodiversity Week
6. Enhance physical and digital access to heritage in public and private ownership
7. Improved access for all to archives, artefacts, museum collections and other heritage records
8. Support the contemporary presentation and interpretation of heritage, including through better use of technology
9. Strengthen measures to acknowledge and protect local heritage, including the heritage of minority communities
10. Integrate the role of heritage in place-making, economic development and sustainable tourism into all relevant strategies
11. Foster opportunities and training for community partners to be directly involved in the care and stewardship of our national heritage.



**HI2030**

**will enable communities and individuals to exercise their rights and responsibilities towards their heritage and to celebrate it through improved access**

# The Work of the Heritage Council

**The Heritage Council as an independent statutory policy advisory agency has worked over the past 25 years to protect, promote and support access to Irish heritage in all its expressions including monuments, archaeological objects, heritage objects, intangible heritage, architectural heritage, flora, fauna, wildlife habitats, landscapes, seascapes, wrecks, geology, heritage gardens, parks and inland waterways. The work of The Heritage Council is broad-ranging and includes implementing and overseeing a number of national flag-ship initiatives summarised below:**

- The initiation and development of a network of County Heritage Officers and County Heritage Plans;
- National Heritage Week;
- The National Biodiversity Data Centre Programme;
- The Discovery Programme;
- Supporting the work of the Irish Landmark Trust;
- The Museum Standards Programme for Ireland;
- The Adopt a Monument Programme
- Heritage in Schools Programme;
- Irish Walled Towns Network;
- Collaborative Town Centre Health Check Programme;
- Historic Towns Initiative;
- Heritage Maps Programme; and
- Conservation Internship Programme.

The Heritage Council provides financial support to the following heritage bodies:

- The Discovery Programme
- The National Biodiversity Data Centre
- The Irish Landmark Trust

The role of the Heritage Council in supporting the implementation of government strategies is recognised at home and abroad. The Heritage Council played a key role assisting the Department in the development of **Heritage Ireland 2030** and it will have a critical role in the oversight and implementation of the strategy.



**Heritage Ireland 2030** will support the critical work of the Heritage Council, the implementation of its strategy - including as policy advisors - and the development of community engagement which will be central to the implementation of **Heritage Ireland 2030**.

# Theme 2



## Leadership and Heritage

At national level, the need for a highly effective heritage policy and regulatory infrastructure is recognised. This must reflect that leadership involves enabling others to lead where they can and must balance the needs of a modern society with a profound respect for and understanding of heritage. These policies and objectives are framed, too, by international and domestic legal frameworks.

**HI2030**

**will commit to government providing leadership and support to organisations, communities, citizens and local government**

## Objectives:

1. Integrate heritage protection and heritage strategy considerations into the work of national, local and regional government and agencies
2. Create an effective and coordinated policy, regulatory framework and governance structure that supports an integrated approach to the protection, preservation, conservation and sustainable use of heritage
3. Ensure the conservation and presentation of our national heritage estate is appropriately resourced through increased capital investment over the lifetime of this plan, to departments, OPW, local authorities and other stakeholders
4. Develop a national programme for monitoring and evaluating the value of heritage
5. Develop a national research agenda for heritage
6. Identify improved measures to assess impacts on heritage, and support monitoring mechanisms
7. Take better care of our built, natural and cultural heritage through increased investment, at a local and national level
8. Invest in heritage skills training, continuous professional development and apprenticeships, increasing professional capacity and new education and training opportunities
9. Identify opportunities for, and realise the potential of, heritage-led economic regeneration and sustainable business and tourism development
10. Improve use of digital technology to inform evidence-based decision-making in heritage and to make information on heritage accessible and available to all
11. Address heritage crime through education and the strengthening of regulation and prosecution
12. Support Ireland's continued adherence to, and ratification of, relevant international frameworks, conventions and directives
13. Strengthen engagement with partners in Northern Ireland, the United Kingdom and EU and with relevant legislation and programmes
14. Promote and develop best-practice standards and guidelines for heritage conservation and management

# The Office of Public Works

**The OPW is responsible for the maintenance and presentation of the heritage estate in State care – a total of almost 800 properties, some of which are the most iconic and important heritage locations in Ireland, known both nationally and internationally.**

The OPW played a key role in developing [Heritage Ireland 2030](#). The responsibility of the OPW in caring for the heritage in state care is a challenging one. These iconic monuments and properties are significant to the identities of towns and communities across the State and are a key driver of tourism and the regional economy.

Protecting, conserving and presenting the built heritage in its care on behalf of the Irish State is a core mission of the OPW's Heritage Services Division. The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, which is responsible for national heritage policy, is a key partner and client in this. The aim of the OPW is to work with the department and other relevant partners to maintain the intrinsic value of the estate and preserve its status for future generations and to present that portfolio to citizens and visitors, ensuring the built environment in our care conveys tangible and intangible merit and distinction commensurate with Ireland's history, culture and identity.

As part of the OPW's *Statement of Strategy 2021-2024*, the agency has developed four key objectives:

- To sustainably protect and conserve the heritage sites, buildings, parks and gardens within our care, with an emphasis on conservation quality and standards
- To present and interpret our heritage sites to their best advantage, ensuring that their potential contribution to tourism is maximised and that visitor enjoyment and education experiences are enhanced

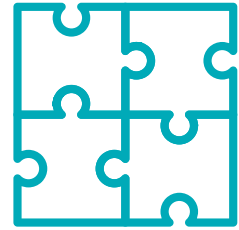


- To develop and maintain knowledge and skills in traditional building, conservation architecture, site conservation and protection, heritage interpretation and collections management and care
- To create, promote and sustain a strong public reputation for heritage excellence by maintaining a consistent high-quality approach to conservation and presentation of the cultural-estate assets in our care



**Heritage Ireland 2030** will support the work of the OPW alongside local authorities in conserving, maintaining and making accessible our national heritage estate.

# Theme 3



## Heritage Partnerships

Heritage – as in many other areas of public policy – benefits from the development of successful partnerships which are crucial to meet our collective responsibilities. **Heritage Ireland 2030** will strengthen heritage partnerships to ensure that we are all better equipped and as effective as we can be in caring for our heritage.

**HI2030**

will build stronger heritage partnerships, enabling stakeholders to better work together to ensure the protection and value of Ireland's heritage

## Objectives:

1. Support Government and local authorities to work effectively together to protect, manage and promote our heritage
2. Build strong partnerships with the OPW, local authorities, public bodies, departments, agencies and other stakeholders to achieve excellence in the management and maintenance of Ireland's heritage
3. Work to expand and develop existing Local Authority partnerships on a cross-border and all-island basis to deliver a more connected approach to heritage
4. Ensure adequate resourcing of the heritage sector
5. Strengthen support for the work of the Heritage Council in the implementation of partnership strategies
6. Improve coordination with private property owners, farmers, the private sector, the National Cultural Institutions, NGOs, local communities and volunteers in the management, protection and maintenance of our heritage
7. Invest in innovation in heritage research, conservation, management and interpretation
8. Increase support for the development of professional standards in heritage management in collaboration with the Heritage Council and professional bodies
9. Build partnerships and links between government and educational institutes, the National Cultural Institutions, businesses and others
10. Provide highest-quality heritage information, guidance and advice as a resource for stakeholders, visitors, researchers and the general public
11. Identify funding paths for heritage in public and private ownership
12. Grow collaboration with students and the education sector to cultivate the next generation of heritage professionals and partnerships

# The Work of Local Authorities and Heritage

**Local Authorities have a critical role in all aspects of the protection, management and promotion of heritage. Across a range of local government service areas they provide services including conservation, culture, libraries, tourism, planning, environment, economic and community development, parks and amenity services, infrastructure and housing.**

Through their policy-making role, elected members are responsible for making development plans. The County Development Plan sets out the strategic framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of the local authority's area and embeds heritage protection at a local level. The local authorities are tasked with the care and management of heritage assets in their ownership such as monuments, protected structures, county archives, museum collections, heritage gardens and parks.

They are also the authorities who chart development within their jurisdictions through the Development Plan process; developers in their own right; and, they are the county/city regulatory authorities in relation to planning. Local Authorities are key to the preservation of our heritage.



**HI2030**

**will support the expansion of heritage and cultural management resources across the local authorities who are so important to the delivery of this framework's objectives**

Local authorities are also key to the sustainable management of Ireland's heritage. To support this function they employ heritage professionals which can include Heritage Officers, Biodiversity Officers, Architectural Conservation Officers, Conservation Architects, Conservation Officers, Archaeologists, Archivists, Museum Curators, Arts Officers and others working together within their respective disciplines and working with local communities and stakeholders to develop and implement policies and strategies to protect, preserve and manage heritage and facilitate a range of programmes, projects and initiatives relating to heritage.

Local authorities establish and co-ordinate City/County Heritage Fora. A Heritage Forum is a cross-sectoral advisory body, whose membership includes local authority (elected representatives and officials), community, NGO, state agency, and educational representatives who advise on the preparation and implementation of County/City Heritage Plans. A Heritage Plan is a five-year strategic action plan for the identification, conservation, management, promotion and interpretation of heritage.

Local Authorities have an essential role in the delivery of **Heritage Ireland 2030** which will aim to strengthen their role in the management, care and promotion of Ireland's heritage and establish policies to underpin their work.

# Implementation of Heritage Ireland 2030



**An Implementation Plan will be developed within six months of the launch of [Heritage Ireland 2030](#). This will elaborate on formation of delivery structures and provide a clear roadmap for implementing actions and meeting objectives.**

**HI2030**

**will build connections between related initiatives across Government and the wider sector to ensure coherence in delivering the vision**

To ensure the success of the Implementation Plan, a delivery model will be established to provide oversight and transparency of the implementation of its actions.

In the context of a whole of government approach to heritage, the interlinked **Heritage Ireland 2030** delivery model will encourage accountable, joint working across government, the heritage sector and all stakeholders. Further detail will be published along with the Implementation Plan, however it is envisaged that the delivery model will include:

- An annual **Heritage Ireland 2030 Summit**, organised by the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage will be held in locations across the state. This will provide an opportunity to bring together stakeholders to report on of progress, celebrate achievements and facilitate engagement on future direction.
- Various **Heritage Ireland 2030 Working Groups** will drive delivery of detailed work plans, based around key priorities and themes. Membership of the Working Groups, which will be managed by the Heritage Council, will draw from Local Authorities, communities, government agencies and across the sector.
- A **Heritage Ireland 2030 National Heritage Forum**, led by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage will drive and coordinate overall delivery.
- A **Heritage Ireland 2030 Senior Officials Group** of representatives of key departments - with the input of local authority, sectoral and agency representation - as a subcommittee of the Senior Officials Group on the Environment and Climate Change will provide high-level oversight and support for the implementation of the framework.
- A **Heritage Ireland 2030 Website** and social media will provide regular updates and material on delivery; all relevant papers will be published online.

The objective of the delivery model will be to maximize the participation and input of existing structures; for example, the proposed National Heritage Forum will work in partnership with existing local authority Heritage Fora to ensure maximum participation from a local level. Continuing the collaborative approach that marked the development of the framework through public consultation, there will be opportunities for members of the public and stakeholders from right across the heritage sector to contribute to the implementation of **Heritage Ireland 2030**.

**Heritage Ireland 2030** will be reviewed after three years, with periodic evaluation of metrics and key performance indicators. Objectives and actions will be reviewed on an annual basis, alongside the production of annual statements of progress.

# Heritage Ireland 2030

## Action Plan

The vision of **Heritage Ireland 2030** is to be realised through a series of actions which will help deliver specific objectives.

The following Action Plan builds on calls for action heard during the public consultation. Reflecting the scale of the consultation process and the scope of responses received through it, over 150 individual actions have been identified. This is not a definitive list. The list of Actions, and the Objectives, will be added to, reviewed, and amended as required based on the work of the various implementation and review groups.

The Actions have been grouped in broad categories. Given the complex and interconnected nature of our heritage there are inevitable overlaps between some categories and apparent gaps in others.

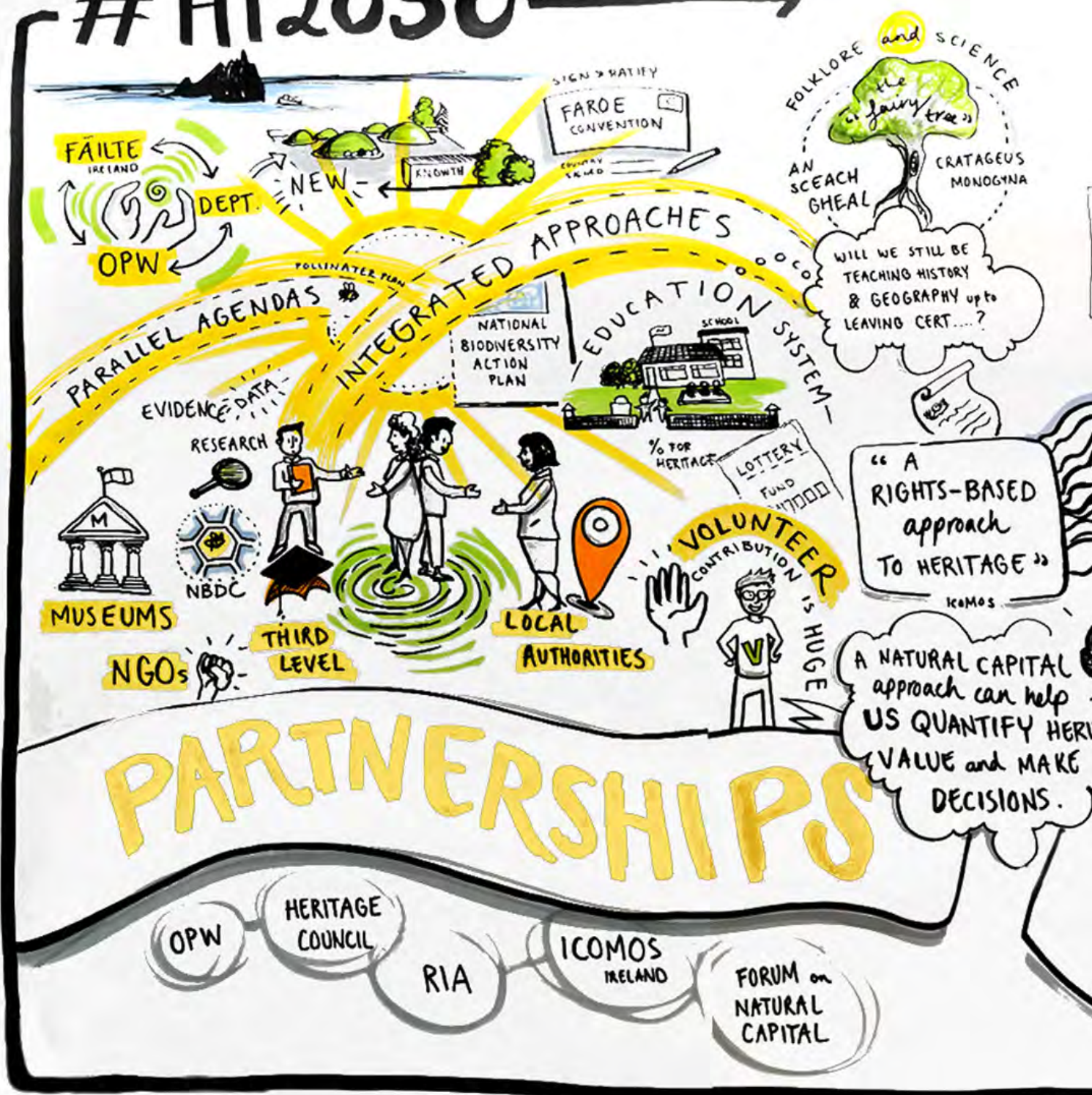
The first task of the Heritage Forum will be to assign lead stakeholders and timeframes to these actions, as part of a detailed Implementation Plan.







# #H12030





## ACTIONS

### Programme for Government commitments in relation to heritage

1. Connect heritage with all relevant priorities within Programme for Government.
2. Publish and implement the new all-of-government heritage Strategic Policy [[Heritage Ireland 2030](#)] and begin its nationwide implementation.
3. Explore multi-annual funding models and ensure adequate funding is made available for the implementation of each County Heritage Plan.
4. Continue to support the role of the Heritage Officers in the areas of heritage education, health and wellbeing and citizen science.
5. Encourage each local authority to appoint a Conservation and Repurposing Officer.
6. Build on community-led schemes such as the Built Heritage Investment Scheme and the Structures at Risk Fund, which provide grant aid to protect and maintain important historic buildings in our local communities.
7. Encourage traditional building skills in devising an apprenticeship programme with the sustainable construction sector focusing on heritage disciplines and crafts.
8. Expand the Heritage in Schools Scheme so that more students can enjoy our rich natural and cultural heritage.
9. Continue with the expansion of the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage and include modern and industrial buildings.
10. Build the capacity of local authorities to lead locally and engage citizens on climate change and biodiversity.
11. Work with the Northern Ireland Executive to deliver the flagship cross-border Ulster Canal project in order to restore the all-island inland water system as a premier tourism attraction.

## ACTIONS

### Programme for Government commitments in relation to heritage

12. Expand the Environment Fund, taking account of the consultation process which has been completed, through the introduction of new levies, and ring fence this money for investment in biodiversity and climate initiatives, including a parks fund to support the development of new parks and wildlife areas.
13. Coordinate the actions in the Programme for Government regarding peatlands to maximise the benefits for biodiversity.
14. Progress the establishment of a Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity.
15. Promote biodiversity initiatives across primary, post primary and third-level sectors, and ensure that schools, colleges and universities across the country play an active role in providing areas to promote biodiversity.
16. Review the remit, status and funding of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) to ensure that it is playing an effective role in delivering its overall mandate and enforcement role in the protection of wildlife.
17. Ensure that every local authority has a sufficient number of biodiversity and heritage officers among their staff complement.
18. Support biodiversity data collection.
19. Publish a new National Pollinator Plan and encourage public bodies to promote and protect biodiversity.
20. Review the protection (including enforcement of relevant legislation) of our natural heritage, including hedgerows, native woodland and wetlands.
21. Develop a new National Invasive Species Management Plan.
22. Introduce policies on supports for urban biodiversity and tree planting.
23. Encourage and support local authorities to reduce the use of pesticides in public areas.

## ACTIONS

### Programme for Government commitments in relation to heritage

24. Continue implementation of the third National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021 and build on the commitments made at the first National Biodiversity Conference.
25. Support local nature groups and local authorities to work in partnership on local biodiversity projects.
26. Support nature-based solutions for land-use management.
27. Continue to raise awareness of biodiversity through initiatives like the Annual Biodiversity Awards Scheme.
28. Building on the success of the UNESCO Dublin Bay Biosphere, achieve further UNESCO designations for Irish sites.
29. Appoint Education Liaison Officers in each of our National Parks to work with schools across the country, to promote the importance of biodiversity and the natural world, and to involve pupils in the work that goes on in our National Parks.

## ACTIONS

### Access

30. Better seasonality at national parks and monuments and historic properties in the care of the State with extended opening hours where appropriate to do so.
31. Improve access to heritage through expanded visitor services and interpretation at national parks, nature reserves, monuments and historic properties in the care of the State.
32. Create more access to heritage through expanded visitor services and opening hours, where appropriate, at cultural institutions and local museums.

## ACTIONS

### Access

33. Develop a national management plan for national cultural heritage datasets.
34. Continue to support Fáilte Ireland partnerships to deliver enhanced and sustainable visitor experiences that can/will act as catalysts for economic activity.
35. Focus government investment in tourism capital projects on improving product quality and innovation, and the development and enhancement of cultural and heritage experiences to attract a wide range of visitors to Ireland.
36. Increase and improve universal access to heritage for the elderly, people with disability and children, including through the use of new technologies.

## ACTIONS

### Built and Archaeological Heritage

37. Integrate heritage considerations into urban and rural regeneration to ensure that built and natural heritage objectives underpin the planning and development process and inform the 'Town Centres First' policy approach.
38. Promote our vernacular built heritage and support associated traditional skills and availability of materials, especially in rural Ireland, and on a cross-border basis in cooperation with the Northern Ireland Executive.
39. Work with the insurance industry to facilitate affordable insurance for thatch structures, Protected Structures and historic buildings.
40. Publish and implement the *A Living Tradition: Understanding, Minding and Handing on Our Built Vernacular* by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.
41. Enact new Monuments and Archaeological Heritage Bill with appropriate communication and training strategy in place.

## ACTIONS

### Built and Archaeological Heritage

42. Review the structure of conservation grants schemes to allow for the introduction of greater flexibility in the spending of funds and a more structured approach to their allocation.
43. Devise a programme supporting early intervention and maintenance of the historic built environment.
44. Direct resources to safeguard buildings that are most at risk to include a dedicated fund for local authorities to enable them undertake emergency stabilisation works or acquire properties by compulsory purchase.
45. Implement the recommendations of the Expert Advisory Committee Report on the Review of Operation of Part IV of the Planning and Development Act 2000.
46. Demonstrate the benefit of routine maintenance and sympathetic conservation repairs of architectural and archaeological heritage through the publication of exemplars funded under relevant heritage grant schemes.
47. Support the expansion of the Historic Towns Initiative, Community Monuments Fund, Historic Structures Fund and Built Heritage Investment Schemes.
48. Support expansion of existing grant schemes for biodiversity protection and enhancement.



## ACTIONS

### Climate Change

49. Implement the Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plans for Biodiversity and Built and Architectural Heritage, working also with the Northern Ireland Executive.
50. Collaborate with other government departments and agencies on the implementation of relevant actions in their Sectoral Adaptation Plans.
51. Carry out Climate Change Risk Assessments in every local authority area to establish a baseline of information from which the benefits and impacts of Climate Change Actions on the built and natural heritage can be measured and documented.
52. Pilot case studies in every local authority on the appropriate and sensitive energy upgrading of traditional buildings to use as exemplars for other home and building owners.
53. Establish Regional Panels of Historic Building Energy Assessors to specify appropriate and non-damaging interventions to retrofit historic buildings.
54. Deliver the relevant actions of the *Climate Action Plan 2021*, many of which contribute directly or indirectly to heritage.
55. Continue to support the work of the Climate Heritage Network.

## ACTIONS

### Communications

56. Support the establishment of a Heritage Youth network.
57. Improve communication about and understanding of the benefits of heritage laws, regulations and policies, and address crimes against heritage.
58. Improve interpretation and visitor management at our national monuments, national parks, national nature reserves and at national heritage properties.

## ACTIONS

### Communications

59. Design outreach programmes to assist social inclusion and civic pride in areas of economic deprivation.
60. Ensure heritage information produced by State bodies meets international Plain English standards and seek the Plain English mark from the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA).

## ACTIONS

### Community

61. Recognise the importance, and broad understanding of local cultural heritage to communities, and support its collection and promotion.
62. Build support for community-led heritage schemes and put in place structures to facilitate access to these and support volunteerism.
63. Collaborate with heritage partners in the EU, Northern Ireland and Britain on areas of mutual interest.
64. Ensure that openness, inclusivity and transparency are at the heart of heritage policy and the approach with which **Heritage Ireland 2030** will be implemented.
65. Develop a 'Heritage and Inclusion' policy in collaboration with disability organisations, immigrant and asylum seeker representative groups, ethnic minority groups i.e. Traveller Representative Organisations, Roma Representative Organisations, and other hard to reach groups.
66. Develop a Code of Practice for appropriate citizen engagement with the public heritage estate.
67. Build on community heritage initiatives such as Heritage Week, Adopt a Monument and the Community Wetlands Forum, and other public engagement activities.

## ACTIONS

### Education/Skills/Heritage Data

- |     |   |
|-----|---|
| 68. | Review and audit heritage skills and address gaps in heritage skills education/training opportunities.  |
| 69. | Establish a National Centre for Traditional Building, Conservation and Maritime Skills in conjunction with third-level institutions and the HEA.  |
| 70. | Develop and implement a Heritage Skills Action Plan in conjunction with the National Skills Strategy and an accredited traditional-building-skills programme in collaboration with Higher Educational Authority.                                |
| 71. | Develop a coherent policy for the management of Ireland's digital heritage data.  |
| 72. | Support the expansion of education services at national parks and national monuments, including recruitment of more specialist education staff to provide enhanced interpretative services and outreach programmes.                             |
| 73. | Work with local authorities to review the existing heritage staff complement to ensure that the service is adequately resourced at the local level, taking into consideration the findings of the 2021 review of the Heritage Officers Network. |
| 74. | Develop Junior Ranger Programmes.   |
| 75. | Work with custodians of heritage in protecting the heritage in their care.  |
| 76. | Work with key bodies to pilot regeneration projects.  |
| 77. | Expand and develop Waterways Ireland education programme.   |
| 78. | Build heritage awareness into school curricula.   |
| 79. | Expand citizen science programmes for heritage and provide support for citizen-science initiatives.   |

## ACTIONS

### Funding

80. Examine use of fiscal incentives to drive investment in heritage and biodiversity.
81. Improve uptake of relevant EU funding streams, including through establishment of EU Heritage Funding Officers to identify and target relevant EU Programmes in coordination with local authorities.
82. Increase support for not-for-profit heritage-centred organisations.
83. Collaborate with the OPW and local authorities on caring for, maintaining and improving access to our national heritage estate.
84. Resource the heritage sector to ensure engagement with and delivery of **Heritage Ireland 2030**.

## ACTIONS

### Developing the Sector

85. Increase support to local authority heritage services and others tasked with providing access to our heritage.
86. Ensure that all heritage professional gaps within all local authorities are identified and filled.
87. Engage with and develop national, cross-border and international networks on a partnership basis to share knowledge appropriately in relation to relevant aspects of heritage practice.
88. Devise standards and guidance on best practice in the conservation and care of heritage.
89. Develop a professional accreditation system for heritage management.
90. Expand Ireland's participation in relevant international programmes and initiatives such as the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme and Green Flag/Green Heritage accreditation programmes.

## ACTIONS

### Innovation

91. Encourage innovation in the heritage sector through continued support of standards programmes, awards, advice series and targeted research.
92. Seed collaboration and research between the third-level education sector and heritage managers/practitioners.
93. Improve social media reach for heritage initiatives.

## ACTIONS

### Intangible and Cultural Heritage

94. Expand the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage.
95. Nominate practices from the National Inventory of Intangible Heritage for international recognition by UNESCO.
96. Develop a Vision, Mission and set of Principles for Intangible Cultural Heritage in Ireland.
97. Enhance engagement with practitioners, communities and stakeholders, such as government departments, the Heritage Council, local authorities and the Arts Council, on the recognition, promotion and safeguarding of Ireland's intangible cultural heritage.
98. Support nature-based solutions for land-use management.

## ACTIONS

### Natural Heritage

99. Enhance and expand natural and cultural heritage results-based Agri-Environmental Schemes and initiatives to deliver on biodiversity, climate adaptation and heritage benefits.
100. Support and resource the National Biodiversity Data Centre to collect, collate, manage, analyse and disseminate data on Ireland's biological diversity, working also with partners in Northern Ireland.
101. Initiate a new plan period of the National Biodiversity Action Plan (2021-25) and publish the review of the outgoing plan, taking account also of all-island factors and cooperation opportunities.
102. Support more all-island approaches to biodiversity protection, including by investing to conserve cross-border region peatlands, building on the success of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.
103. Explore development of a new National Marine Park around the Skelligs and Blasket Islands, subject to all required environmental assessments and screening.
104. Establish a Citizen's Assembly on Biodiversity.
105. Establish a Youth Forum on Biodiversity (with Comhairle na nÓg) to inform National Biodiversity Action Plan.
106. Make available on an electronic portal a register of all Appropriate Assessments carried out in the State.
107. Increase local-community engagement with the Natura 2000 network across Ireland.
108. Promote our inland waterways and their heritage to increase recreational and tourism access and participation, working also with the Northern Ireland Executive and supporting the work of Waterways Ireland across the island.
109. Undertake survey of historic gardens, demesnes, monuments and parklands to increase protection, awareness and appreciation of their cultural heritage value and the biodiversity they support.

## ACTIONS

### Natural Heritage

110. Advance the implementation of the National Landscape Strategy and completion of a National Landscape Characterisation Assessment.
111. Prioritise the restoration of raised and blanket bog Special Areas of Conservation and Natural Heritage Areas and restore other protected habitats and species.
112. Raise awareness of invasive species through a nationwide programme.
113. Advance measures to protect and enhance coastal and marine heritage, both natural and cultural in the context of the developing National Marine Spatial Plan.
114. Advance measures to protect historic gardens, demesnes and other cultural landscapes.
115. Repurpose waterways' built heritage infrastructure.

## ACTIONS

### Heritage in State Care

116. Develop an MOU between NPWS, National Monuments Service and OPW Heritage Services to enhance biodiversity at National Monuments sites across the State.
117. Ongoing review of existing heritage policies to identify where statutory actions may help to enhance the protection of lands owned and/or controlled by the State.
118. Review existing administrative arrangements underpinning care of NPWS infrastructure both in terms of land and buildings to ensure their optimum efficiency and effectiveness.
119. Achieve optimum levels of heritage staff so that they are enabled to perform at world class level the broad spectrum of habitat, species and built and archaeological heritage protection duties in our national parks and nature reserves.

## ACTIONS

### Heritage in State Care

120. Ensure high quality standards for heritage interpretation.
121. Sponsor quality research initiatives around the heritage estate in State care.
122. Pursue a broad programme of academic engagement and publication on the heritage estate.
123. Use quality research to directly inform better visitor engagement and interpretation.
124. Support the National Parks and Wildlife Service to deliver *Experiencing the Wild Heart of Ireland: A Tourism Interpretative Plan for Ireland's National Parks and Coole-Garryland Nature Reserve*.
125. Develop a trail-management programme for the 400-kilometre National Parks and Wildlife Service trails and walks network, subject to necessary environmental and planning provisions, to ensure sustainable management of habitats and species.
126. Develop strategies in relation to the portfolio of properties in State care in terms of management, interpretation, care of collections and specific policies bespoke to historic houses, and landscapes and historic parks and gardens.
127. Continue the work of the Outdoor Amenities Group.
128. Support appropriate projects and programmes intended to digitise archives and collections associated with the State's heritage assets and make them more widely accessible to citizens.
129. OPW to develop a corporate Biodiversity Strategy to include specific actions relating to the National heritage estate in its care.
130. Professionalise the administration of the heritage estate.



## ACTIONS

### Policy/Research/Strategy

131. Ensure that our heritage policies recognise and protect the heritage and cultural identities of minority communities and that the **Heritage Ireland 2030** implementation structures reflect this.
132. Develop public procurement strategies which acknowledge specific competences required for conservation and heritage projects.
133. Implement a *Heritage Skills Action Plan* in accordance with the *National Skills Strategy*.
134. Ensure heritage policy coherence with UN Sustainable Development Goals.
135. Support the implementation of *Archaeology 2025: Strategic Pathways for Archaeology in Ireland*, as developed by the Royal Irish Academy, including development of a National Archaeological Research framework.
136. Support the roll-out of the new *National Policy on Architecture*.
137. Review existing built- and natural-heritage policy/legislation to identify where improvements can be made.
138. Implement the key recommendations contained in the European Year of Cultural Heritage report.
139. Work closely with stakeholders to develop research methodology which ensures that future heritage policy is evidence based and data driven.
140. Support research in environmental sustainability in respect of existing historic buildings.
141. Support the development of a centre of excellence in biodiversity/ ecological and landscape management for terrestrial and marine environments.

## ACTIONS

### Policy/Research/Strategy

142. Articulate a national research agenda for heritage and provide dedicated funding and investment in this to inform best practice in management of the State's heritage assets and improved interpretation and visitor experience outcomes and to ensure that our heritage policy is evidence based and data driven.
143. Develop a dedicated research framework to examine the beneficial links between heritage and well-being to help understand which heritage characteristics best promote personal and societal well-being.
144. Support the further development of policy for cultural heritage and collections.

## ACTIONS

### Structures

145. Establish the structures for delivery of **Heritage Ireland 2030**, as outlined in this document.
146. Enhance Local Authority heritage professional resources.
147. Position Ireland as an active and respected contributor to international policies and the debate on natural and cultural heritage.
148. Continue the preparation and implementation of County/City Heritage Plans and resource their implementation with a view to maximising their effectiveness and assistance in the delivery of **Heritage Ireland 2030**.
149. Continue development of the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

## ACTIONS

### International co-operation and action in protection of heritage

150. Advance the implementation of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and the World Heritage Convention.
151. Adopt a World Heritage Policy for Ireland and support World Heritage Property applications.
152. Strengthen Ireland's participation in international co-operative efforts to protect heritage.
153. Maintain active engagement with intergovernmental organisations dealing with natural and cultural heritage, in particular UNESCO and the Council of Europe.
154. Undertake to implement Ireland's relevant obligations under the various International Conventions which Government has already signed and ratified and review key international conventions in this area which Ireland is not currently party to.
155. Participate actively in the work of the international conventions in this field to which Ireland is already party.
156. Set out the steps to put in place the necessary domestic legislation and structures for the 2005 Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention) recognising the associated benefits to the furtherance of our cultural heritage and particularly in the context of the European Union.
157. Ensure that the obligations under international conventions continue to be fully implemented through domestic legislation and actions.
158. Review key international conventions in this area which Ireland is not currently party to, with a view to deciding which should be ratified and putting in place the necessary domestic legislation and structures to allow such ratification.

## Relevant Policies and Initiatives

The responsibility of managing heritage falls to many. Below is a non-exhaustive list of policies and initiatives across government agencies and bodies that have relevance to the heritage sector. This list develops all the time. **Heritage Ireland 2030** will seek to support these agencies and bodies and build bridges between existing and emerging policies to strengthen the impact of heritage investment and support.

*Action Plan for Apprenticeship 2021-2025*

*Action Plan for Jobs 2018*

Adopt a Monument

*A Living Tradition: a strategy to enhance the understanding, care and handing on of our built vernacular heritage*

*Archaeology 2025: Strategic Pathways for Archaeology in Ireland*

*Audiovisual Action Plan*

*Biodiversity: Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan*

*Built and Archaeological Heritage: Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan*

*Climate Action Plan 2021*

County/City Biodiversity Plans

County/City Heritage Plans

Creative Ireland Programme

Cruinniú na nÓg

*Culture 2025: Éire Ildánach*

*Experiencing the Wild Heart of Ireland: A Tourism Interpretative Master Plan for Ireland's*

*National Parks and Coole-Garryland Nature Reserve*

*Heritage at the Heart: Heritage Council Strategy 2018–2022*

Historic Towns Initiative

*Investing in our Culture, Language and Heritage 2018–2027*

*National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017–2021*

*National Development Plan 2018–2027*

*National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015–2025*

National Outdoor Recreation Strategy

*National Peatlands Strategy*

National Planning Framework

National Policy on Architecture Resources

*National Raised Bog Special Areas of Conservation Management Plan 2017–2022*

National Seascape Character Assessment

National Volunteering Strategy 2021–2025

*People, Place and Policy: Growing Tourism to 2025*

Project Ireland 2040

*Realising Our Rural Potential: Action Plan for Rural Development*

*Straitéis 20 Bliain don Ghaeilge 2010–2030 (The 20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010–2030)*

*The Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan 2018–2020*

Tourism Recovery Plan

*Town Centres First*

## Images/Credits

Page	Title	Credit
Front Cover	Clockwise from top right: Metal Man Rosses' Point, County Sligo; Wild Nephin National Park; Common Blue Damsel <i>Enallagma cyathigerum</i> ; Killarney House, County Kerry; Hill of Tara, County Meath; Killarney National Park, County Kerry	Sligo County Council; Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) (National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS)); DHLGH (NPWS); DHLGH (NPWS); DHLGH (National Monuments Service (NMS)); DHLGH (NPWS/ Peter O'Toole) Kilkenny Medieval Mile Museum
Page 2	Bulfin Heritage Rally	Kilkenny Medieval Mile Museum
Page 10	Masonry conservation works at Ballymalis Castle, County Kerry	DHLGH
Page 13	Clara Bog Nature Reserve and Boardwalk, County Offaly	Therese Kelly
Page 14	Killarney National Park, County Kerry	DHLGH (NPWS)
Page 16	Poulnabrone portal tomb, the Burren, County Clare	DHLGH (NMS)
Page 17	High Cross, St Colmcille's Church, Durrow, County Offaly	DHLGH (NMS)
Page 18	Moulting grey seal pup <i>Halichoerus grypus</i>	Oliver Ó Cadhla
Page 21	Thatching demonstration	The Heritage Council
Page 22	The Burren	DHLGH (NMS)
Page 23	Digging History at Swords Castle, Heritage Week	The Heritage Council
Page 26	Grianán an Aileach, County Donegal	DHLGH (NMS)
Page 27	Ulster Canal	Waterways Ireland
Page 28	Hoverfly bee <i>Eristalis tenax</i>	Tina Claffey
Page 30	Natterjack Toad <i>Epidalea calamita</i>	Brian Nelson
Page 32	Athenry Medieval Festival	Lorcan Scott
Page 35	Collon Church, Collon, County Louth	DHLGH (National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH))
Page 37	Connemara, County Galway	Carsten Krieger

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Page 38	Heritage Ireland 2030 emoji competition winner	Laura Ryan, St Brigid's National School, Coon, Co Kilkenny
Page 39	Heritage Ireland 2030 emoji competition winners	Ella Murray, Taunagh National School, Riverstown, Co Sligo; Bonnie Hegarty O'Brien, Timoleague National School, Cork; Gabrielle Doroz, Sacred Heart School, Granard, Co Longford
Page 40	Gallan Community School, Ferbane visiting Clara Bog, County Offaly as part of NPWS public awareness outreach	DHLGH (NPWS/ Jerome Deldridge)
Page 41	White Prominent Moth <i>Leucodonta bicoloria</i>	Brian Nelson
Page 42	Historical re-enactment group at the Battle of the Boyne visitor centre, Oldbridge, County Meath	DHLGH (NMS)
Page 44	Heritage Council headquarters, Kilkenny	The Heritage Council
Page 49	Doneraile Court, County Cork	Office of Public Works
Page 54	Hill of Tara, County Meath	DHLGH (NMS)
Page 57	Smyth's Siopa Tae, Main Street, Ballinmore, County Leitrim	DHLGH (NIAH)
Page 58/59	Heritage Ireland 2030 Consultation Forum 2019	Illustrator Eimear McNally
Page 80	Faddan More Psalter	National Museum of Ireland
Page 83	Muckross Abbey, County Kerry	DHLGH (NMS)

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## Notes

# Notes



