

Heritage

supporting



jobs



education



tourism

An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council



STRATEGIC PLAN 2012 - 2016



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The Heritage Council



STRATEGIC PLAN 2012-2016

HERITAGE — SUPPORTING EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TOURISM

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Kilkenny, Ireland

Telephone: + 353 56 7770777, Fax: +353 56 7770777

Email mail@heritagecouncil.ie

www.heritagecouncil.ie

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CONTENTS

I	MINISTERIAL STATEMENT	4
II	CHAIRMAN'S VIEW	5
III	16 KEY OBJECTIVES FOR 2016	6
IV	IRELAND IN 2016	12
V	VISION, MISSION, VALUES AND MANDATE	13
VI	YOUR HERITAGE, OUR FOCUS	15
VII	GOALS, STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS	18
VIII	DELIVERING THE STRATEGY	35



I Ministerial Statement

Since its inception in 1995 the Heritage Council has made a significant contribution to vastly improving our collective appreciation and understanding of our rich national heritage. This Strategic Plan builds on that good work. I appreciate that the Council has prepared this ambitious Plan at a time when the resources available to the Council have diminished significantly. This is a time of change and this Plan responds to that change.

The Plan has also been prepared at a time when the Government has announced that the Council is to be reviewed to consider if its functions should be merged with my Department. The review is taking place in the context of the Government's policy to put in place a more streamlined public sector. The review will take into account the significant legislative and policy developments in the heritage area since the Council was established and will consider how best to promote and cherish our heritage in the context of a smaller public sector and reduced resources. This review will be completed quickly.

Regardless of the outcome of that review, the objectives set out in this Strategic Plan will help guide the delivery of key heritage services over the next five years. In its focus on developing the value of the heritage sector to employment, education and the quality of heritage tourism, the Heritage Council is reflecting current economic and social imperatives. The 16 Key Objectives for 2016 will require flexibility, innovation and partnership by all heritage stakeholders if they are to be successfully met. In setting out a vision to 2016 I particularly commend the proposals to commemorate the 1916 period in a way which will complement the wider national commemorations.

The success of the Council to date has been marked by its capacity to adapt and change in order to maintain the quality and relevance of its public service. This Strategic Plan reflects that capacity and I believe that its ambitious objectives will be achieved in a manner that supports the contribution of our national heritage to the well-being of our nation.

Jimmy Deenihan, TD

Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht



This Strategic Plan has been born into a socio-economic context that is utterly different from that of its predecessor. At the time of writing, we are in the grip of an evolving global recession. Faced with a worryingly uncertain economic future, job creation has become a priority. Though Ireland will never be immune to global market forces, the sense that some solid ground can be attained around our own natural and cultural resources has highlighted the role that heritage and heritage tourism might play in generating sustainable employment.

Our great storehouse of natural and historical landscapes and artefacts has a proven track-record of supporting jobs. How this capacity is grown over the next few years is of the highest importance. Bound up with our heritage is the precious core of who we are as individuals, as communities and as a nation. As witnessed by the record 600,000 people who participated in Heritage Week events in 2011, values such as these are not merely communally owned; in sharing them, we forge ourselves and our future. This is why sustainability of employment in the heritage arena is contingent on safeguarding the integrity of the heritage. The Heritage Council — championing active citizenship, creative communities and meaningful public participation — plays a unique role as the advocate of best practice and quality in the conservation and presentation of the heritage, and of knowledge-based decision-making.

Today, the principles of inclusivity, shared ownership and shared stewardship are to the fore of heritage conservation and management, and are enshrined in the latest *Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society* (also known as the Faro Convention). The Faro Convention is a timely reminder to heritage professionals and decision-makers that the public right to participate in and benefit from their heritage underpins all heritage conservation, management and legislation. Keeping the public at arm's length from the management of the heritage is no longer acceptable. Indeed, it never was. This outmoded approach serves only to erode the public's sense of ownership and responsibility for their heritage, and turns the process of thinking about heritage into an exclusive, and sometimes self-serving, monologue. A disinterested, disengaged public will neither demand nor recognise the best in heritage protection, conservation and management, nor will they enjoy fully the contribution that heritage can make to quality of life.

As the phrase implies, 'shared stewardship' is about bridge-building: heritage professionals and the general public need to learn how to listen to each other, and how to work together. Shared stewardship is a two-way street. The Heritage Council is actively committed to heritage professionals and the general public, and regards a healthy heritage sector as an informed and balanced fusion of both. Embedding the principle of shared stewardship in the conservation and management of our heritage is one of the key challenges for the next decade.

Since its inception, the Heritage Council has played a leading role in imagining, supporting and creating a heritage infrastructure in Ireland. For the infrastructure to become greater than the sum of its parts, we must now shape it into a heritage sector. This is another of the key aspirations of this Strategic Plan.

The Heritage Council has worked to raise the bar of professional training and best practice. Similarly, we are totally committed to the principle that knowledge is the key to the full enjoyment of, and participation in, the responsible and effective stewardship of the heritage. Education, therefore, in all its guises, will underpin the work of the Heritage Council in the coming years. Education represents a long-term investment in our future. That journey starts here.

Conor Newman
Chairman
The Heritage Council



Heritage is a vital part of our identity and sense of place. It is an intrinsic part of our everyday life, and an exceptional resource offering employment, recreation, health, learning and enjoyment. There is good economic justification in supporting heritage. Its social value is priceless in terms of community-led projects, pride in the character of our streetscapes and landscapes, and in the need to care for our everyday environment.

This Strategic Plan will guide and direct the work of our Board and our staff during 2012–2016. We are fully aware of our operational environment. In particular, we realise the need to contribute to national recovery and to demonstrate how heritage can be a resource for social and economic development. A quality heritage supports employment, offers an outstanding educational resource, and supports heritage-based tourism.

In agreeing 16 key objectives for 2016 Council will set goals and prioritise actions to deliver its objectives.

Key Objectives 1-3

Supporting Employment

- 1 Invest in heritage infrastructure that, through innovative and new approaches, maintains productive jobs in the public and private sectors. This will build on the 70 jobs directly created already in a range of heritage infrastructure throughout the regions.¹
- 2 Identify and support innovative new aspects of heritage infrastructure such as Ireland Reaching Out and the Burren Charter. These contribute to productive employment in the public and private sectors and develop new approaches to the understanding, maintenance, enjoyment and quality of our natural and cultural heritage
- 3 Sustain and revitalise investment with key partners in local authorities (particularly through the Heritage Officer programme and the Irish Walled Towns Network) to build on the 1,012 jobs supported in this area of activity to date.²

Key Objectives 4-7

Supporting Education and Awareness

- 4 Develop the Heritage in Schools scheme and disseminate research on the physical and mental benefits for children of learning outdoors. The Heritage Council will expand direct involvement in education through the Heritage in Schools Programme, from 110,000 participants in 2011 to 200,000 in 2016 as funding allows.³
- 5 Expand our commitment to third-level education by encouraging an integrated approach to heritage education and landscape studies and by developing, in partnership with third-level institutes, qualifications in Landscape Character and in Biological Recording.
- 6 Support grants programmes and awareness-raising initiatives that contribute to the development of jobs, education and quality tourism by making the most of our heritage assets through conserving, maintaining and enhancing heritage buildings, collections, habitats and sites.
- 7 Maintain our grant administration costs at 8% (per €1 million) and continue to monitor and review our grant aid outcomes. These currently show that every €1m in grants supports 70 jobs directly and 300 jobs across a range of related sectors.⁴

Key Objectives 8-12

Supporting Heritage-based Tourism

- 8 Invest in a new Historic Towns and Villages initiative in collaboration with Fáilte Ireland, thereby maintaining heritage integrity and improving the quality of our historic towns and villages for residents and tourists.
- 9 Build year-on-year on the 18,700 tourists specifically attracted to Heritage Council supported projects in 2010 and maintain the 4.1 ratio of return on investment.⁵
- 10 Develop a community-led approach to celebrate the 1916 Centenary by encouraging Heritage Week events that consider the social, economic and political environment of the day.
- 11 By 2016, and in partnership with the 50 members of the Museum Standards Programme, and the conservation sector put in place an exhibition of our tangible and intangible cultural assets associated with 1916.
- 12 Build on the recent success of Heritage Week and similar festivals to increase its international audience. This will be achieved through working with relevant partners to enhance its international profile and tourism potential. This will increase public participation from 600,000 in 2011 to 1 million by 2016.⁶

Key Objectives 13-16

Modern Frameworks and Mechanisms

- 13 Develop and encourage innovation in heritage by providing an integrated framework for the management of our heritage assets particularly through the use of IT and through promoting the establishment of a Landscape Observatory for Ireland.
- 14 Develop, with government, a new empowering and community-led enabling approach to the management and conservation of our heritage assets, including the development of a Landscape Ireland Act.
- 15 Build on current and evolving research on the economic and health contribution of heritage; disseminate its key findings; and implement its recommendations as funding allows.
- 16 Participate in European projects that can showcase the value of Ireland's heritage and promote those skills of our heritage practitioners that also provide learning and innovation.

Actions prioritised to achieve these 16 objectives for 2016 will be applied to ensure delivery of 3 goals. These goals show how heritage plays a critical part in:

- Contributing to identity, well being and health
- Managing and conserving for sustainable development
- Facilitating appreciation and enjoyment

To reflect its statutory responsibilities all of Council's work is framed in the context of:

- Proposing policies and priorities for the national heritage
- Supporting new and existing heritage infrastructure and partnerships
- Running a series of targeted grants programmes



Council will channel all the resources at its disposal, within a framework of policy proposals, infrastructure support and grants, and using specific goals, strategies and actions to achieve as a minimum its 16 key objectives for 2016.



IV Ireland in 2016

The period of this Strategic Plan includes many anniversaries, such as the centenary of 1916, as well as the important events that led to this and the foundation of the Irish State. These events will be important points of public debate and interest and we must remember the presence of diasporas and new communities in Ireland and ensure that our heritage is inclusive and open to all.

In setting its vision, the Heritage Council needs to prepare itself to deal with a constantly changing environment. It needs to be fully cognisant of, and respond fully to, the challenges and opportunities presented in public sector reform and be innovative, flexible and efficient in all its work.

The plans and policies of other sectors will have a significant bearing on the successful delivery of this Strategic Plan. To be effective, Council needs to plan and manage for these in the protection, conservation and management of heritage. Examples include:

- Growth targets within the government's *Food Harvest 2020: A Vision for Irish Agri-Food and Fisheries* include a 33% increase in the value of primary output in the agriculture, fisheries and forestry sector by 2020. This will have a significant impact on farmland and rural heritage, as will forthcoming changes in the Common Agricultural Policy post-2013.
- Development pressure for new homes may currently be in decline, but neglect and under-investment are now issues for heritage assets. Development pressure and construction for some sectors (such as renewable energies, oil and gas) is likely to rise, both onshore and offshore.
- Declining levels in funding sources for voluntary, community and non-governmental organisations will undermine their development and the work they do for heritage and community, despite the apparent growth in the number of people who undertake voluntary work.
- The importance of heritage to a vibrant tourism industry is well recognised. While there is increasing pressure to use Ireland's heritage resource to attract increasing numbers of tourists to help in the recovery of the economy, declining investment levels in the management, protection and conservation of heritage undermine the capacity of heritage to sustain a tourism industry.

These are just some of the factors that will affect the delivery of the Heritage Council's key objectives for 2012-2016.

V The Heritage Council's Vision, Mission, Values and Mandate

Vision

Council's vision is that the enduring value of heritage is enjoyed, managed and protected for the vital contribution it makes to our identity, our well-being and our future.

Mission Statement

The Heritage Council's mission is to engage, educate and advocate to develop a wider understanding of the vital contribution that our heritage makes to our social, environmental and economic well-being.

A current imperative will be to ensure that the significance of heritage in supporting jobs, as an educational resource and in maintaining the quality of heritage tourism is fully recognised and realised.

Core Principles and Values

Since its establishment, the Heritage Council's experience has led it to embrace a set of core principles and values that it views as fundamental to its organisational success. These reflect government policy as it relates to partnership, sustainability and equality and national commitments to protect, manage and identify our national heritage, as well as recent discussions about the role of the public service in Irish life.

The work of the Heritage Council will therefore be underpinned by the following core principles and values:

- Partnership and participation
- Sustainability and quality of life
- Equality, social inclusion and accessibility
- Provision of a professional and efficient service
- Transparency

These principles will be applied in all work done by the Heritage Council and will underpin its aspirations to secure a more cohesive and coherent heritage sector during the period of this plan.

The Heritage Council's Mandate

The functions of the Heritage Council are primarily established by the Heritage Act, 1995. These are, inter alia:

- To propose policies and priorities for the identification, protection, preservation and enhancement of the national heritage, including monuments, archaeological objects, heritage objects, architectural heritage, flora, fauna, wildlife habitats, landscapes, seascapes, wrecks, geology, heritage gardens and parks and inland waterways.

Heritage Act 1995 Section 6 (1)

- The Council shall in particular:
 - promote interest, education, knowledge and pride in, and facilitate the appreciation and enjoyment of the national heritage,
 - co-operate with public authorities, educational bodies and other organisations and persons in the promotion of the functions of the Council,
 - promote the co-ordination of all activities relating to the functions of Council.

Heritage Act 1995 Section 6 (3)

- Council may make recommendations to the Minister on any matter relating to the Council's functions and may make such recommendations public.

Heritage Act 1995 Section 7

- Council shall, if the Minister so requests, furnish the Minister with advice on any matter relating to the functions of the Council and with information regarding the performance of its functions.

Heritage Act 1995 Section 8

- The Minister may ... confer on the Council such additional functions relating to the national heritage as the Minister thinks appropriate.

Heritage Act 1995 Section 9

The Heritage Council is a prescribed authority/body under the provisions of the *Planning and Development Acts 2000-2010* and the *Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2011*, in accordance with its functions under Section 6 of *The Heritage Act 1995*. As a prescribed body, the Heritage Council has statutory powers in relation to the two core processes of planning:

- Provide advice on the formulation of planning policy.
- Provide advice in relation to proposed development management projects, which impact on heritage assets and features.

VI Your Heritage, Our Focus

The Heritage Council champions heritage as a vital part of our identity and sense of place. It provides the backbone of our community, our culture, our tourism and agricultural industries, and stimulates entrepreneurship and innovation in the wider economy. Its benefits extend into the wider community: it is an intrinsic part of our everyday life, and an exceptional resource offering employment, recreation, health, learning and enjoyment. While there is good economic justification to support heritage, its social value is priceless in terms of creative community-led projects.⁷ It also instils pride in the character of our streetscapes and landscapes, and contributes to our health and well-being.⁸ The need to care for our everyday environment is self-evident. A failure to cherish and care for our heritage will have an impact beyond the heritage sector.

Heritage strongly shapes contemporary culture and informs the Irish imagination in terms of literature, music, design, language, folklore, oral heritage and the landscape. How a society and a community values and looks after its heritage reflects strongly on that society and the way in which it is perceived by others.

What is Heritage?

The *Heritage Act* (1995) defines heritage as including

'monuments, archaeological objects, heritage objects, architectural heritage, flora, fauna, wildlife habitats, landscapes, seascapes, wrecks, geology, heritage gardens and parks and inland waterways'.

At the local level particularly, heritage is considered more broadly by many to include genealogy, folklore, oral heritage and local history. In working in partnership with local communities, the Heritage Council will continue to respect this broader view.

Our Focus

Council will focus on change through the following:

- Empower communities, and voluntary and non-governmental organisations, to engage with their heritage through a range of grants schemes and enabling advice and support. Under Council's Strategic Plan 2007-2011, €33 million was allocated in grant assistance to a variety of projects in order to achieve our mission. The work and commitment of such communities and organisations have contributed significantly to the management and protection of heritage, and the Heritage Council will continue to support them in this vital role.
- Work in partnership with national and local government, state agencies, county and city heritage fora and third-level institutions to ensure a co-ordinated and joined-up approach to managing heritage.
- Mobilise information, awareness, and on-the-ground projects through County and City Heritage and Biodiversity Plans.
- Develop and support national heritage infrastructures, including the National Biodiversity Data Centre, the Discovery Programme, the Irish Walled Towns Network and the Irish Landmark Trust, the Wicklow Uplands Council, and Woodlands of Ireland.

- Support a wide network of heritage professionals, including conservators, ecologists, archaeologists, conservation architects, museum curators, ecologists, thatchers, other craftspeople, and many others through training, bursaries and internships, and by establishing standards of best-practice.
- Provide research-based policy proposals and submissions and identifying priorities for national and local government.

Heritage and Sustainable Employment

In drafting this Strategic Plan, the Heritage Council is fully aware of its operational environment. In particular, we realise the need to contribute to national recovery and to demonstrate how heritage can be a resource for social and economic development. There are several ways through which heritage can play a greater role in the creation of sustainable employment.

- Encourage entrepreneurs to lead and develop new ways of working in the heritage sector such as Ireland Reaching Out.
- Refurbish, conserve, restore and maintain heritage buildings, collections and sites, and provide sustainable employment into the future with the Museums Standards Programme and the Irish Walled Towns Network.
- Upgrade the historic building stock in ways that allow for greater energy efficiency and sustainability through targeted grants assistance.
- Organise training programmes for conservation specialists, related professions and property owners and the potential for up-skilling for construction workers as undertaken by local heritage officers
- Promote the role of heritage in community development, tourism, both domestic and international, and in other sectors, such as farming and agriculture, in cooperation with Wicklow Uplands Council, Woodlands of Ireland and Bere Island.
- Reinforce connections between heritage and the arts in museums, galleries and cultural events in partnership with the Arts Council and the Crafts Council.

Heritage Council projects create and support a large number of local, highly skilled jobs. Many of these jobs require knowledge of traditional Irish crafts and modern professional skills, as well as an understanding of our heritage, such as our habitats, wildlife and archaeology.

Analysis of our 2010 Grants Programme has found that:

- Projects funded by the Heritage Council indirectly supported an estimated 307 jobs.
- In total, the Heritage Council funded projects that supported an estimated 449 jobs in 2011.

- 62% of organisations believe that tourism would have declined in their region if they had not received a grant from the Heritage Council.
- For every €1 spent by the Heritage Council, the Irish tourism industry receives €4.4 through increase in tourism

Our focus will be to maintain and, where possible, enhance these values.

Infrastructure and Partnerships

In order to deliver our key objectives, our operational capacity is dependent not just on our core staff, but on our network of heritage infrastructure such as the Local Authority Heritage Officer Network, the National Biodiversity Data Centre, the Discovery Programme and our various partnerships and relationships such as the Irish Landmark Trust, Woodlands of Ireland and local landscape initiatives such as the Wicklow Uplands Council, the Burren Charter and the Bere Island Project Group.

The scope and scale of the work outlined above and under our new Goals and Strategies can only be achieved by an organisation that grasps the benefit of partnership and innovation, particularly given the overall reduction in staffing levels. This, in combination with current government policies on public sector recruitment and employment, makes it even more critical that we continue to work in partnership and in support of others to ensure the delivery of our Vision and Mission. Significantly, we must continue to find and emphasise new and innovative ways of working

This critical heritage infrastructure, and the partnerships that we develop and support throughout the country, help us to achieve far more for heritage and our communities than can be done by working alone. Our Strategic Plan 2012-2016 reflects this reality in its scale of ambition and the objectives it sets.

Goals, Strategies and Actions - Prioritising 16 Key Objectives for 2016

This section defines the proposed Goals and related Strategies for Council in each of its activities on policy and innovation, infrastructure support and grants. The Goals are inter-related with one another and are based on Council's Vision and Mission. The Strategies and Actions under each Goal also feed into each other and collectively, will deliver the 16 Key Objectives for 2016 listed at the beginning of the plan.

Goal i To increase the understanding of the contribution that heritage makes to our identity, well-being, health and to sustainable development.

Related Strategies (see Table 1, pp22-24)

- Lead the national debate on the contribution of heritage to sustainable development
- Encourage greater involvement in caring for places, objects and landscapes through volunteering and community engagement
- Lead the debate on the contribution of heritage to physical and mental health and well-being
- Develop and promote the social, economic, environmental and health value(s) of heritage to key sectors, including tourism and agricultural sectors
- Increase understanding of the distinctiveness of Ireland's landscapes and how that contributes to quality of life and local identity
- Encourage an increase in sustainable activity in heritage-rich locations
- Engage the Irish diaspora in heritage
- Strengthen articulation of the links between art, culture and heritage, in particular the development of the individual/ community 'sense of place'
- Foster the development of traditional building and conservation skills for heritage conservation

Goal ii To manage and conserve heritage to contribute to sustainable development

Related Strategies (see Table 2, pp26-29)

- Propose and communicate on policies and priorities for the identification, protection, preservation and enhancement of heritage
- Fulfil the Heritage Council's role as a prescribed body
- Improve the management and curation, accessibility and use of heritage data, particularly through new digital technology

- Strengthen capacity of heritage infrastructure bodies to contribute to heritage protection, management and conservation
- Maximise the levels of heritage expertise within
 - local authorities
 - trades and relevant professions
- Promote the use of, and scope for, heritage within urban regeneration, in accordance with best practice
- Improve status of heritage through planning, management and conservation works
- Demonstrate and develop best practice in heritage research, protection, management and conservation

Goal iii To promote and facilitate knowledge, appreciation and enjoyment, of our heritage

Related Strategies (see Table 3, pp 31-39)

- Commission and support research and survey work on heritage
- Encourage activities that promote and facilitate enjoyment and knowledge of our heritage
- Support professional development in relevant sectors
- Further develop heritage as a learning resource, both inside and outside the formal education system

In achieving these Goals, existing jobs can be supported and new ones created. Making our heritage more available and more enjoyable, for instance, means creating a network around each heritage asset, from teacher-guides, to transport, accommodation, maintenance, servicing and visitor facilities. Modern heritage audiences typically seek out more textured experiences and avail of other local activity offerings.

Goal i: Contributing to identity, well-being and health

Ireland's heritage is an essential element of our identity, contributing as it does to our sense of place both nationally and locally. Heritage attractions such as museums, historic buildings, monuments and parks, as well as our rural and urban landscapes, provide unique resources for learning and recreation, or a break from the stresses of everyday life. These places contribute massively to the quality of life in Ireland and give a competitive advantage in attracting a skilled and talented workforce.

High-quality landscapes, based upon local distinctiveness and a strong cultural identity, can deliver benefits such as employment, education and ecosystem services. Our heritage can also be beneficial to and help support our mental and physical health and well-being, and can contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.⁹ Large parts of the economy are based upon the built, natural and cultural heritage resource, for example, through food production, tourism or other natural resources. Frequently, the strength of our tourist offering is at its greatest around historic sites and streetscapes, high-quality landscapes and designated areas. In 2009, cultural heritage tourism generated €1.9 billion for the national economy. Visitor Attitude Surveys repeatedly identify the Irish landscape and our historic urban centres as significant visitor attractions. Landscape and heritage attractions provide an important means for domestic and foreign visitors to experience and enjoy our heritage and environment. A key issue here is the management and interpretation of the heritage resource to meet tourism needs, while still recognising the need to care for this resource sensitively through ongoing maintenance and conservation.

Our natural heritage is also the foundation of several of our key sectors, such as agriculture and fisheries, and it has been conservatively estimated that this is worth at least €2.6 billion to the Irish economy per annum.¹⁰ Indeed, our more extensive agricultural practices have also directly influenced the development of our natural and cultural heritage and landscapes. Environmental sustainability is also recognised as an essential requirement for the 21st-century food production system, which presents both challenges and opportunities. *Food Harvest 2020* highlights the ambition for Ireland to become synonymous with the production of environmentally sustainable products so that consumers recognise that when they buy Irish, they are 'choosing to value and respect the natural environment'.¹¹ In addition, pride in a living countryside that protects its heritage has also been identified as a key marketing strength. However, balancing these two ambitions will be challenging and will not happen accidentally.

The social aspect of sustainable development, which dignifies the role that people play in making and maintaining an environment that is both beautiful and life-sustaining, is closely tied to the principles of heritage conservation. The tools and methods used to manage heritage (conservation plans, stakeholder participation in decision-making, negotiating consensus on what is significant about a place, value-mapping etc.), which are familiar to those involved in conservation, are relevant outside the heritage sector, and can be of benefit to society generally as tools to achieve sustainable development.

The provision of policy advice on best practice, as well as supporting initiatives that can create new heritage-based sustainable economic opportunities are two ways in which we can respond to the current economic situation. In addition, the 'place-making' potential of heritage, and the ability of heritage to contribute to regeneration, be it urban or rural, should not be under-estimated. Increasing the understanding of the contribution that heritage makes to a wide range of economic sectors, and to the importance of sustainable, rather than sustained, development, should also help to mobilise improved management of our heritage. With a decline in levels of construction and development comes an opportunity to put in place new policies to manage our heritage, while still realising the need to tackle issues of decay and neglect due to falling levels of investment.

Goal i: Contributing to identity, well-being and health

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	RELATED KEY OBJECTIVE	POLICY, INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
Strategy 1 Lead the national debate on the contribution of heritage to sustainable development	Conduct research to determine the contribution of heritage to sustainable development, economy and society.	Key Objective 15	Policy	State agencies Local authorities
	Leverage research findings to communicate with media, the public and key sectors (e.g. tourism and agriculture).	Key Objective 13	Policy	Government agencies and departments
	Encourage new economic opportunities based on sustainable use of the heritage resource.	Key Objective 15	Policy Infrastructure	Research institutions
	Organise regional workshops to develop and communicate economic opportunities based on the sustainable use of the heritage resource.	Key Objective 3	Policy	Recording and citizen science initiatives
	Explore the usefulness of a National Ecosystem Services Assessment and promote results of the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity Reports, as appropriate.	Key Objective 13	Policy	
	Communicate on the value and importance of lesser-appreciated types of heritage (such as traditional boats, oral history, archives, poorly understood or studied aspects of wildlife, industrial archaeology and post-1700 archaeological monuments and places).	Key Objective 13	Policy / Grants	
	Organise an annual National Grants Expo to promote the work of these projects.	Key Objective 13	Policy / Grants	
	Propose national frameworks that provide a more cohesive and integrated approach to the management and conservation of heritage assets.	Key Objective 14	Policy	
Strategy 2 Encourage greater involvement in caring for places, objects and landscapes through volunteering and community engagement	Maintain and develop the role of Heritage Week, including leverage to communicate heritage messages more effectively.	Key Objectives 6, 12	Infrastructure	IWTN communities
	Maintain and develop existing heritage awards (e.g. within Tidy Towns Competition/Heritage Week/Education and Irish language).	Key Objective 6	Infrastructure	Local authorities Wicklow Uplands Council
	Provide capacity building supports to non-governmental organisations and heritage groups to help them grow and develop.	Key Objectives 1, 2	Infrastructure Grants	Burren Beo
	Explore the 'adoption' of heritage sites by local communities.	Key Objectives 1, 2	Grants	Bere Island Projects Group
	Continue to support, develop and administer a variety of heritage grant schemes to support community and volunteer engagement with heritage at local, regional and national levels.	Key Objective 7	Infrastructure Grants	National Biodiversity Data Centre
	Support the engagement of communities in recording and fieldwork through Community Archaeology and Citizen Science initiatives.	Key Objective 6	Grants	Museums sector
	Encourage the sustainable utilisation of heritage as a resource in community and rural development.	Key Objective 8	Grants	

Goal i: Contributing to identity, well-being and health

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	RELATED KEY OBJECTIVE	POLICY, INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
Strategy 3 Lead the debate on the contribution of heritage to physical and mental health and well-being	Collate and commission research, as required. Support the work of heritage infrastructure bodies in their relevant activities. Heritage Week. Undertake strategic research on health and heritage aimed at families/schools and leverage the Heritage in Schools scheme to promote a change in behaviour and a better understanding of our dependency on nature for health and well-being. Identify opportunities to promote 'greening' of urban spaces. Build further on green infrastructure work and the benefits for urban dwellers. Find innovative ways to promote biodiversity day nationally. Promote new research in this area in <i>Heritage Outlook</i> Heritage Council website and other fora, as appropriate	Key Objective 4 Key Objective 4 Key Objective 4 Key Objective 4 Key Objective 8 Key Objective 13 Key Objective 13 Key Objective 13	Policy Infrastructure Infrastructure Policy Policy / Grants Policy Infrastructure Grants Policy / Grants	
Strategy 4 Develop and promote the social, economic, environmental and health value(s) of heritage to key sectors, including tourism and agricultural sectors	Promote heritage-based tourism events such as Irish Walled Towns Day and Heritage Week. Increase awareness of the need to manage heritage as a sustainable tourism resource, supported by case studies such as the Waterways Corridor studies. Highlight the role of natural heritage in supporting the agricultural sector. Develop a joint Heritage Council/Fáilte Ireland/Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DAHG) initiative to promote heritage houses and heritage towns and villages. Undertake targeted communications on the interconnection between heritage, agriculture and tourism in marginal areas	Key Objective 9 Key Objectives 8, 12 Key Objectives 16, 14 Key Objective 8 Key Objective 13	Infrastructure Grants Infrastructure Grants Policy Infrastructure Grants Policy	Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DAHG) State agencies Local authorities Enterprise and development agencies
Strategy 5 Increase understanding of the distinctiveness of Ireland's landscapes and how that contributes to quality of life and local identity	Support local communities and individuals in the collection of the folklore and oral history connected with Ireland's landscapes. Increase awareness and appreciation of vernacular architecture in rural and urban environments. Improve our understanding and highlight the essential role that landscape features play in regional landscape character (e.g. stone walls, hedgerows). Support the protection and conservation of traditional shopfronts and vernacular (hand-painted) signage. Work with Fáilte Ireland and tourism companies to market the 'distinctive' aspects of our heritage. Promote the undertaking of landscape character assessment, historic landscape characterisation, habitat mapping.	Key Objective 6 Key Objective 6 Key Objectives 13, 14 Key Objective 8 Key Objective 9 Key Objective 14	Grants Grants Policy Grants Policy Policy	Local authorities Oral history and heritage groups Researchers, Tourism bodies and agencies Government departments



Goal i: Contributing to identity, well-being and health

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	RELATED KEY OBJECTIVE	POLICY, INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
Strategy 6 Encourage an increase in sustainable activity in heritage-rich locations	Support access to and use of museums. Support through ongoing grants programmes. Support the realisation of the potential of the Waterways Corridor studies.	Key Objective 6 Key Objective 7 Key Objective 6	Infrastructure Grants Policy / Grants	Museums sector Infrastructure bodies Tourism agencies Voluntary and community sectors
Strategy 7 Engage the Irish diaspora in heritage	Support high-quality heritage projects communicating with the Irish diaspora.	Key Objective 2	Grants Infrastructure	Diaspora projects (e.g. Ireland Reaching Out)
Strategy 8 Strengthen articulation of the links between art, culture and heritage, in particular the development of the individual/community 'sense of place'.	Facilitate and support more integrated cultural/heritage/education/art events with support from local communities.	Key Objective 12	Grants Infrastructure	Arts Council Cultural Teams within local authority arts, archive, museum, heritage and libraries, and environmental awareness officers, Heritage in School Programme
Strategy 9 Foster the development of traditional building and conservation skills for heritage conservation	Promote an inter-agency approach to the establishment of a national training programme for the development of traditional building and conservation craft skills. Support trade organisations that promote traditional building skills' training and standards initiatives. Support increased labour activation measures for heritage professions and trades.	Key Objective 16 Key Objectives 8, 16 Key Objectives 1, 2, 3	Infrastructure Policy Infrastructure Grants Policy Infrastructure Grants	3rd-level institutes DAHG FAS/Solas RSS LEADER OPW Local authorities Crafts Council Professional institutes

Goal ii. Managing and conserving for sustainable development

Ireland's heritage, including our landscape, is the culmination of the interactions of people and their natural environment over many millennia — from our predominantly farmed landscapes to the stone of our buildings. We each have a role to play as the custodians of this heritage and can make significant contributions to its protection, management and conservation. Through increasing awareness and recognition of the value of heritage and its place at the heart of everyday life (Goal i), a more collaborative and cohesive approach to the management and conservation of heritage will be achieved. This, in turn, will support better planning for change, increase the role of heritage in urban regeneration, and help in achieving sustainable development. Today, our heritage faces an increasingly complex range of challenges. Whether this results from the accelerating impacts of climate change, neglect and under-investment, or the demands of an increasingly urbanised and suburbanised society on our natural and cultural resources, there are major issues that need to be resolved. Changes are required in how we plan, manage and conserve our heritage and our broader environment. This is critical if we are to pay anything more than lip-service to the ambitions of sustainable rather than sustained development. Heritage is often presented as an obstacle to economic or infrastructural development. Too often, we see commentary that pits wildlife or an archaeological site against the interests of the public or an economic opportunity. We need to find ways of accommodating and tailoring sustainable change to ensure that heritage and development are managed compatibly and sustainably. While we may not be able to resolve or remove all conflict, we can make greater efforts to find solutions that satisfy the broader needs of heritage. We can also help to maintain the contribution that heritage makes to our identity, well-being, physical and mental health, and critical economic sectors.

Several layers of action are required to deliver this goal, including research (which can also be delivered under Goal iii), standards development and heritage infrastructure, as well as supportive legislation and national, regional and local policies.

Goal ii. Managing and conserving for sustainable development

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	RELATED KEY OBJECTIVE	POLICY, INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
Strategy 1 Propose and communicate on policies and priorities for the identification, protection, preservation and enhancement of heritage (including under Section 6 of <i>Heritage Act</i>)	Propose policy advice and make submissions to appropriate government bodies on new and developing policies, plans, regulations etc. that will impact upon heritage, such as: protection of heritage of national importance, the impact on heritage of climate change, marine and maritime heritage, wildlife and biodiversity, agriculture and high nature value farming, architecture, archaeology, national monuments and UNESCO World Heritage Site status (WHS), planning, landscape, development, the impact on heritage of renewable energy, sale of state assets, under-used churches, environmental assessments, subsidies etc.	Key Objective 14	Policy	Communities Non-governmental and voluntary organisations Other state agencies and departments
	Review existing legislation and policies to improve consideration of heritage within.	Key Objective 14	Policy	
	Maintain links with NGOs, communities, stakeholder organisations etc. to inform policy advice development.	Key Objective 14	Policy Grants	
	Communicate with key stakeholders on such policy advice and submissions. .	Key Objective 14	Policy	
	Review the implementation of existing legislation and provide policy advice to improve its effectiveness.	Key Objective 14	Policy	
	Advocate for the establishment of a Planning Aid Service to support the public in their engagement with the planning process.	Key Objective 3	Policy	
	Maintain and develop the Heritage Council's reputation as a 'centre of excellence' that will pursue innovative and creative approaches to managing the national heritage.	Key Objective 13	Policy	
	Encourage the drafting of a new National Heritage Plan and the establishment of a widely constituted implementation group to assist with its delivery.	Key Objective 13	Policy	
Strategy 2 Fulfil the Heritage Council's role as a prescribed body	Provide comment to relevant planning authorities on development projects that will impact on heritage assets.	Key Objective 3	Policy	
	Review the Heritage Council's role in the planning process.	Key Objective 13	Policy	

Goal ii. Managing and conserving for sustainable development

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	RELATED KEY OBJECTIVE	POLICY, INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
Strategy 3 Improve the management and curation, accessibility and use of heritage data, particularly through new digital technology	Develop and improve data and information management and curation from Heritage Council supported projects	Key Objective 13	Policy	Heritage infrastructure
	Continue to advocate for and support relevant heritage data management infrastructure (e.g. National Biodiversity Data Centre, Landscape Observatory, National Landcover / Habitat Map).	Key Objectives 2, 13	Infrastructure	Grants recipients Planning authorities
	Develop and expand user-friendly tools to facilitate accessibility and use of heritage information and data and to build a geodata heritage database (e.g. Heritage Map Viewer, Irish Archive Resource).	Key Objective 13	Policy Infrastructure Grants	Heritage professionals, Oral History Network
	Support publications through ongoing Grants Programme.	Key Objective 7		
	Promote use of heritage data in decision-making.	Key Objective 15	Grants Policy Infrastructure	
Strategy 4 Strengthen capacity of heritage infrastructure bodies to contribute to heritage protection, management and conservation	Develop and maintain the National Biodiversity Data Centre, Discovery Programme, Irish Landmark Trust, Museum Standards Programme of Ireland, Woodlands of Ireland.	Key Objective 11	Infrastructure Grants	Central Government Professional Institutes and Sectors, such as IPCRA, ICHAWI and Records Association
	Maintain and continue support and training for the Local Authority Heritage Officer Network.	Key Objective 3	Infrastructure Grants	
	Support cultural heritage bodies in the conservation, archives, and museums sector.	Key Objective 16	Infrastructure Grants	
	Maintain conservation internship programme and expand to other areas, as feasible.	Key Objective 5	Infrastructure Grants	



Goal ii Managing and conserving for sustainable development

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	RELATED KEY OBJECTIVE	POLICY, INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
Strategy 5 Maximise the levels of heritage expertise within - local authorities, - trades and relevant professions (cross-reference with Strategy under Goal iii)	Maintain and continue support and training for: - the Local Authority Heritage Officer Network - Local authority biodiversity officers - Local authority field monument advisors Further develop the relationship between heritage and architectural conservation officers. Support training and professional development opportunities within local authorities, trades and professions. Maintain Museum Standards Programme of Ireland. Maintain conservation internship programme and expand to other areas, as feasible.	Key Objective 3 Key Objective 3 Key Objective 16 Key Objective 11 Key Objectives 11, 13	Infrastructure Grants Infrastructure Grants Infrastructure Grants Infrastructure Grants Infrastructure Grants	Local authorities Dept of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht Museums sector Professional institutes and organisations
Strategy 6 Promote the use of, and scope for, heritage within urban regeneration, in accordance with best practice	Develop and showcase projects that illustrate the contribution of heritage to urban regeneration (e.g. existing European case studies). Develop and support best-practice guidelines on the re-use of heritage for urban regeneration.	Key Objectives 8, 16 Key Objective 8	Policy Infrastructure Grants	Interreg, LIFE+, LAs
Strategy 7 Improve status of heritage through planning, management and conservation works	Support heritage conservation and management projects through the Grants Programme (e.g. Heritage Management, Built Heritage Schemes, Irish Walled Towns Network, County Heritage and Biodiversity Plans etc.). Support development and implementation of landscape-scale conservation and management initiatives and Conservation Plan-led projects (such as on high-nature value farming, and in the Burren, Wicklow Uplands, Aran Islands, Bere Island). Support stakeholders in leveraging additional funding for such projects from European sources. Continue National Community-led Village Design Programme II. Continue National Public Realm Plan Programme for Historic Towns. Work with Department of Environment, Community and Local Government to mobilise Leader funding for heritage projects.	Key Objective 7 Key Objective 2 Key Objective 16 Key Objective 8 Key Objective 8 Key Objective 16	Grants Infrastructure Grants Infrastructure Grants Grants Grants Policy	Voluntary and non-governmental organisations Other state agencies and local authorities Govt departments

Goal ii Managing and conserving for sustainable development

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	RELATED KEY OBJECTIVE	POLICY, INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
Strategy 8 Demonstrate and develop best practice in heritage research, protection, management and conservation	Continue to update existing Heritage Council guidelines on best practice in research and survey methods, and protection, management and conservation methodologies.	Key Objective 6	Policy	European and international heritage bodies and agencies
	Continue to develop the Museums Standards Programme of Ireland (MSPI) and the Museum Awards Scheme.	Key Objectives 6, 11	Policy Infrastructure	Museums sector
	Promote best practice in the conservation and management of our heritage, including in the management of non-protected heritage.	Key Objective 11	Policy	Conservation sector
	Continue to promote the use of conservation and management plans, and Waterway Corridor Studies, as appropriate.	Key Objective 13	Policy Grants	Rural development sector
	Develop links and learn from developing best practices overseas.	Key Objective 16	Policy	Government departments
	Promote the use of best practice in any utilisation of heritage as a resource for tourism, community and rural development etc.	Key Objective 1	Policy Infrastructure	Farming organisations
	Promote the application of best principles in the design of farming for conservation programmes.	Key Objective 2	Policy	Research organisations
	Engage with EU-level projects that seek to propose innovative ways to manage heritage.	Key Objective 16	Policy	

Goal iii Facilitating, appreciation and enjoyment

People will work to maintain and look after something if they care about it. Caring can be created through a variety of ways — by emphasising our dependence on something (such as our mental and physical health) or by highlighting the benefits something brings to us, such as enriching and increasing our enjoyment of our everyday lives. Caring for heritage is a critical piece of the support structure that the Heritage Council is committed to developing, building and sustaining. People can be, and are, also inspired by the presence of our heritage and its intrinsic value, from an iconic landscape such as the Burren, to the everyday landscape of the streets or fields around their homes. This inspiration can be cultivated and strengthened, helping us to achieve our long-term vision. This can be done in a number of ways, such as by stimulating national debate on heritage issues, by retaining our focus on existing audiences while reaching out to new ones, such as reaching out with our communications through the Irish language and with the diaspora.

It is anticipated that a significant proportion of the work to be undertaken under Goal iii will be supported by the Heritage Council but delivered by other organisations. For instance, voluntary and non-governmental organisations do a huge amount of work each year to increase public awareness, appreciation and enjoyment, both at the community and at the national level. The Heritage Council hopes to be able to continue to support such work through its Grants Programme.

We need to focus not solely on promoting and facilitating our enjoyment of our heritage but also on increasing our knowledge and understanding of it — and in turn, linking that to its management and conservation (Goal ii). The Heritage Council considers that research is instrumental in mobilising understanding and appreciation of our heritage, as well as in improving its management and increasing its contribution to sustainable development.

Goal iii Facilitating, appreciation and enjoyment

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	RELATED KEY OBJECTIVE	POLICY, INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
Strategy 1 Commission and support research and survey work on heritage (including baselines, county-level surveys etc.)	Commission research, as required, particularly to support the provision of policy advice (cross-reference with Goal 2.1) and on the relationship between heritage and health, economic aspects of heritage.	Key Objective 15	Policy	Research institutions recording and citizen science initiatives
	Review, update and expand existing studies, as necessary (e.g. Waterway Corridor Studies).	Key Objective 6	Policy / Grants	Discovery Programme
	Support co-ordinated survey of maritime heritage (e.g. boats, skills, intertidal etc.).	Key Objective 13	Policy	National Biodiversity Data Centre
	Support research on the museums sector (contents, resources, statistics).	Key Objective 15	Policy	Local authorities
	Continue the support of the Irish Archive Resource and promote its expansion.	Key Objective 13	Infrastructure Grants	Government departments and voluntary agencies
	Scoping exercise and strategy development on digitisation of cultural heritage data.	Key Objective 13	Policy Infrastructure	Waterway heritage groups
	Continue and maintain research and survey work through various Grants Programmes (e.g. Heritage Research, County/City Heritage, INSTAR and Biodiversity Plan Programmes).	Key Objective 15	Policy	
	Support the implementation of National Research and Survey Programmes, as relevant to heritage (e.g. Biodiversity Knowledge Gaps, Biodiversity Platform, NIAH garden/designed landscapes).	Key Objective 15	Policy	

Goal iii Facilitating, appreciation and enjoyment

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	RELATED KEY OBJECTIVE	POLICY, INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
Strategy 2 Encourage activities that promote and facilitate enjoyment and knowledge of our heritage	Maintain existing Grants Programmes to support such activities.	Key Objective 2	Grants	Local communities and societies
	Maintain support to infrastructure bodies and networks to undertake such activities.	Key Objective 2	Infrastructure Grants	Community and voluntary groups
	Maintain Heritage in Schools Programme.	Key Objective 4	Infrastructure	Oral History Network
	Maintain Heritage Week and associated Awards Scheme.	Key Objective 10	Grants	Local authorities
	Support representation of our heritage in key international showcases and networking events.	Key Objective 16	Policy	Other state agencies
	Ensure that the knowledge dividend from recent large-scale public investment in archaeology is widely communicated to the public.	Key Objective 14	Grants	NOGs
	Best practice guidelines on heritage signage.	Key Objective 6	Policy	Youth organisations
	Promote development of Youth Ranger Programmes with agencies responsible for management activities at heritage sites (e.g. OPW, NPWS).	Key Objective 13	Policy Infrastructure Grants	Tourism and culture bodies
	Expand Interpretation Training Scheme developed by Fáilte Ireland and MSPI.	Key Objective 6	Policy Infrastructure Grants	
Strategy 3 Support professional development in relevant sectors	Develop partnerships with heritage-sector professional institutes to support their CPD programmes including LCA.	Key Objective 5	Infrastructure	Professional Institutes (e.g. ICHAWI IAI, Ecology Sector)
	Maintain teacher-training opportunities through teacher training colleges.	Key Objective 5	Infrastructure	Professional sectors
	Develop partnerships with professional institutes in sectors that impact upon heritage to increase heritage- related training opportunities.	Key Objective 16	Infrastructure	Academic institutions
	Maintain conservation internship programmes and expand to other areas, as feasible.	Key Objective 5	Infrastructure	
	Develop Career Opportunities Programme for heritage trades and graduates.	Key Objective 5	Infrastructure	

Goal iii Facilitating, appreciation and enjoyment

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	RELATED KEY OBJECTIVE	POLICY, INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
Strategy 4 Further develop heritage as a learning resource, both inside and outside the formal education system	Maintain Heritage in Schools Programme. Capitalise on primary school engagement and increase the Heritage in Schools website, expanding its role as a platform for resources on the linkages between health and heritage.	Key Objective 4 Key Objective 4	Infrastructure Infrastructure	

VIII Delivering the Strategy

The Heritage Council itself has the capacity to drive, mobilise or implement only a small number of these actions, at any given time, while it may be in a position to support the implementation of many more, for example through grant aid, which are being led by other partners. The Heritage Council's framework for delivery is through.

- Policy and Innovation: priorities and proposals to government, along with the research to support these.
- Development and provision of support to critical heritage infrastructure.
- Provision of support through grant aid.

The objective of the support that we provide to infrastructure bodies and through our grants schemes is to deliver on our overall Vision and Mission. Thus, we maintain close links with each of these bodies to ensure that this happens. This is also why our Grants Schemes can change and evolve as they reflect changing times, increasing levels of knowledge, realisation of knowledge gaps, or the development of new priorities for research or awareness activities. The Heritage Council periodically revisits the objectives of our Grants Programmes to maintain this delivery on our priorities, as evidenced by our re-structuring of our Grants Programmes in late 2009, into Heritage Research, Heritage Management and Heritage Outreach, Education and Awareness.

The structure for delivering Strategy 2012-2016 is based on:

- The Heritage Council (expertise, creativity and corporate responsibility)
- Council Committees (as required in the *Heritage Act*)
- Working Groups (time limited and themed)
- Council Staff (flexible and innovative)
- Heritage Infrastructure and Key Partners (delivery and support of specific tasks)

The Heritage Council

The Heritage Council is a body corporate with perpetual succession (Heritage Act 1995 5(3)). Its members are appointed by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht. Council is responsible for determining all strategy, finance and policy advice matters. It also retains responsibility for delivery of specific projects. The members of Council add significantly to the freshness of thought and in maintaining an innovative culture in the work of the organisation.

Council Committees

Committees are appointed to perform functions allocated to them in line with the actions outlined in the Strategy. To this end Council has appointed the following committees as specified by the Heritage Act: Archaeology, Wildlife, Architecture and Inland Waterways. As Council has moved away from a sectoral committee approach to a much more integrated and multidisciplinary focus the role of the committees is one of annually proofing policy delivery and specific sectoral tasks as required. A Finance and Audit Committee monitors expenditure and adherence to appropriate corporate governance procedures.

Working Groups

Council has convened a series of inter-disciplinary working groups to examine key aspects of heritage. These include working groups on Landscape, Climate Change, Material Culture and Valuing Heritage. Such groups are brought together from Council members; committee members with additional outside expertise to address priority work areas within a given timeframe. Council will establish time limited working groups as required to assist in its work.

Council Staff

Council employs its own staff of fifteen (consisting of professional and administrative staff) who report to the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive reports to Council. Staff members are responsible for initiating, planning, executing, monitoring and controlling all projects and programmes arising from the Strategy. Where external funding allows, additional contractors are retained to help deliver on aspects of the Strategy. Additional valuable assistance is available through internship and training programmes.

Since 1996 Council has operated a performance management system for all staff and is committed to providing opportunities for professional development and training for its staff.

Heritage Infrastructure and Key Partners

For an organisation with a complex national brief, the Heritage Council has a relatively small staff and budget. This fact, combined with its specific functions under the Heritage Act 1995, obliges the Heritage Council to work with others to achieve the outcomes of this Plan. We welcome this need for a collaborative approach and have identified a wide range of critical heritage infrastructure and partners at all levels including:

- Local authorities (including the Heritage Officer Network, heritage forum, community groups, and individuals)
- Regional (including regional authorities, tourism groups)
- National (including government departments, semi-state agencies, cultural institutions, NGOs, professional bodies and individuals)
- International (including the International Council of Monuments and Sites, International Centre for the study of the preservation and the restoration of cultural property, International Union for Conservation of Nature, EUROPARC, the European Network of National Heritage Organisations, the European Environmental and Sustainable Development Advisory Council and many others)

In addition, the Heritage Council has helped to establish and manage a range of critical infrastructures for the management and conservation of heritage. These are:

- The Discovery Programme
- The National Biodiversity Data Centre
- The Irish Landmark Trust
- Woodlands of Ireland
- The Museums Standards Programme
- The Irish Walled Town Network (IWTN)

37

We also provide support to a range of local landscape-level, community-led initiatives or infrastructures:

- Bere Island Project Group
- Wicklow Uplands Council
- Burren Charter

All aspects of the Strategy will be delivered in association with one, or a combination, of the partners listed above. In addition, the Heritage Council will actively seek further partnerships that will assist it in implementing this Strategy.

In drafting this Strategic Plan, the Council is fully aware of its operational environment. In line with guidance issued by the Department of Finance and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, the Heritage Council is committed to making the most effective and efficient use of the resources made available to it by the government. Best use of existing resources will be achieved through:

- Developing the skills and flexibility of our staff and engaging with national internship and job placement schemes.
- Efficient use of our resources and information technology.

- Constantly improving general operational and project management processes and procedures on all programmes and projects, including evaluations.
- Acquiring new sources of public and private sector investment and sponsorship for our national heritage, including the development of new programmes and projects.

Financial Plan 2012 - 2016

The following table shows the Heritage Council's aspirational budget over the plan duration:

Financial Projections 2012-2016 (millions)

YEAR	Policy Proposals	Infrastructure Support	Grants Programmes	Administration	Total
2012	1,026	3,200	2,325	1,500	8,051
2013	1,026	3,200	2,360	1,478	8,064
2014	1,026	3,200	2,395	1,455	8,076
2015	975	3,360	2,431	1,434	8,200
2016	926	3,528	2,468	1,412	8,334

Targets and Key Performance Indicators

Each action identified for implementation in this Strategic Plan will be subject to a planned programme of work. This will be developed by the relevant staff member or team and agreed with the Chief Executive. The performance management programme will identify the staff member with responsibility for implementation and will reflect the following priorities:

- Expected objectives and outcomes of each action
- Targets for each action, including financial targets
- Specific timelines
- Key performance indicators to be used to monitor and evaluate progress

All of these will assure the delivery of the 16 Key Objectives identified at the beginning of the Plan 2012 -2016.

Goals	Our performance will be evidenced by reaching the objectives set at the beginning of this Strategy and by using measurements such as:
<p>Increase the understanding of the contribution that heritage makes to our identity, well-being, health and to sustainable development.</p> <p>Manage and conserve heritage to contribute to sustainable development.</p> <p>Promote and facilitate knowledge, appreciation and enjoyment, of our heritage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number and value of heritage grants provided to local communities, heritage professionals and institutes ■ Match funding and additional investment provided to Heritage Council grant-aided projects ■ Number of jobs supported in the heritage sector by Heritage Council funding ■ Policy submissions made to national and local government ■ Planning responses as per Heritage Council prescribed status ■ Individual actions commenced/implemented under each Goal (through policy advice, support for infrastructure, or grant assistance) ■ Output from the bodies and satellites that we fund <p>In doing, this our performance will also be evidenced by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Positive stakeholder feedback ■ Number of external requests for advice ■ Website statistics ■ Contribution to seminars and conferences ■ Participation of our staff in continuing professional development ■ Percentage of invoices paid within 15 days

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Heritage Council aims to be a successful learning organisation in the short, medium, and long term. Therefore, it is important that the strategy, which is effectively a road map, is continuously monitored and evaluated to ensure that the organisation moves in the desired direction during the Strategic Plan period of 2012-2016. Another benefit of continuous monitoring and evaluation is that it will provide valuable new information and material about the Heritage Council and its day-to-day operations.

Responsibilities for Monitoring and Evaluation: The Management Team of the Heritage Council is responsible for the overall implementation of the Strategy, and the designated staff are responsible for achieving each objective, target and outcome(s). The Chief Executive will report to Council on a six-monthly basis in relation to the status of implementation, including progress towards each of the strategic themes. In turn, the Chief Executive will be provided with status reports from Council's Management Team in relation to assigned objectives, targets, and outcomes.

Monitoring and Evaluation Programme: The monitoring and evaluation programme will consist of a combination of ongoing monitoring and evaluation status reports annual performance review (incorporated into the Annual Report as an output statement), and a mid-term review in 2014.

Reference

- ¹ These figures include employment through the local authority Heritage Officer Programme, and in the Discovery Programme, the National Biodiversity Data Centre, the Landmark Trust, Wicklow Uplands Council.
- ² These figures are based on economic evaluation of the Heritage Council grants programme undertaken in July and August 2011 by economist Janis Umblijs
- ³ Based on figures supplied by the Irish National Teachers Organisation (INTO) www.heritageinschools.ie
- ⁴ These figures are based on economic evaluation of the Heritage Council grants programme undertaken in July and August 2011 by economist Janis Umblijs
- ⁵ These figures are based on economic evaluation of the Heritage Council grants programme undertaken in July and August 2011 by economist Janis Umblijs
- ⁶ These figures are based on analysis of figures from Heritage Week 2011 www.heritageweek.ie
- ⁷ Ecorys and FitzPatrick and Associates 2011. The Economic Value of Ireland's Historic Environment, report commissioned by the Heritage Council
- ⁸ With reference to "landscape", the Heritage Council uses the definition of the term, as per the European Landscape Convention and the Planning and Development Act: "Landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors". This includes urban and peri-urban, as well as rural, landscapes.
- ⁹ Sustainable Development, as defined in the Bruntland Commission Report (1987), is development "that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".
- ¹⁰ Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2008. The Economic and Social Aspects of Biodiversity: Benefits and Costs of Biodiversity in Ireland. Government of Ireland.
- ¹¹ Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food 2010. Food Harvest 2020: A vision for Irish agri-food and fisheries, www.agriculture.gov.ie/agri-foodindustry/foodharvest2020/

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