Climate Action Roadmap

2024

An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council

Contents

1 Introduction

1.1 ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

The Heritage Council is a statutory body established under the Heritage Act 1995. Our aim is to propose policies and provide advice for the protection and management of built, natural and cultural heritage, and to promote interest, education, knowledge, and pride in our heritage. We engage in partnerships with local authorities, communities, heritage organisations, and government bodies at national and local levels. Heritage Council staff includes heritage professionals and specialist practitioners dedicated to conserving Ireland's natural, built, tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

The Heritage Council is committed to sustainability, reducing our environmental impact and showing leadership in the heritage sector. The organisation aims to implement energy-efficient practices and to minimise carbon emissions at our headquarters, Áras na hOidhreachta in Kilkenny, in line with the Public Sector Climate Action Mandate (See targets in Appendix 1).

Energy consumption includes thermal energy for heating office premises, electrical energy for daily operations, and fuel consumption for staff travel. The SEAI Monitoring and Reporting portal[1] is used to monitor and report on energy efficiency and greenhouse gas emissions, to ensure quality, transparency and accountability.

1.2 LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ENERGY AND CLIMATE ACTION

The Heritage Council aims to meet the requirements of the Climate Action Mandate 2024 by adhering to relevant legal requirements, including:

- **Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021:** The Heritage Council will ensure its activities align with Ireland's climate goals.
- **SI393/2021 Energy Performance of Buildings:** The Heritage Council has plans to upgrade the fabric of our headquarters in Kilkenny, through a planned process of retrofit consistent with the sensitive nature of this historic property. One electric vehicle charging point has been installed and demand will be monitored to ensure more points are installed if needed.
- **SI381/2021 Clean Vehicles Directive:** This Directive includes targets for clean vehicle procurement in 2025 and 2030. In the absence of a transport fleet, this not currently relevant for the Heritage Council.
- **SI4/2017 Energy Performance of Buildings:** This provision requires new public sector buildings to be nearly zero emissions and is not currently relevant for the Heritage Council, in the absence of plans for new building development.

[1] See https://www.seai.ie/business-and-public-sector/public-sector/monitoring-and-reporting/

- **SI646/2016:** The Heritage Council procures only energy-using products and vehicles listed on the Triple E register as required.
- **SI426/2014:** The Heritage Council aims to demonstrate exemplary energy management, and an Energy Audit was completed in June 2023. Provisions relating to leases and purchase of new buildings are not currently relevant for the Heritage Council.

1.3 PROGRESS TO DATE

The Heritage Council has a Green Team in place, working actively since 2023. A Head of Climate Change was appointed in late 2022. Efforts to reduce energy consumption and emissions have strengthened through the preparation of a detailed energy audit, and through initiatives such as energy awareness and implementation of sustainable travel policies, though it is acknowledged that considerable increase in activity is required if targets are to be met.

Heritage Council direct energy consumption constituted 0.002% of the total public sector energy use in 2023. Despite this small percentage, the organisation is committed to fulfilling the obligations of the public sector mandate by 2030. A tangible impact will be made not only through reductions in energy and resource-use, but also through leadership within both the heritage sector and the broader community. This will be quantified by mid-2025 by the commissioning and publication of a Climate Impact Assessment and Sustainability Strategy for the organisation, currently underway.

Heritage Council headquarters in the former Bishop's Palace in Kilkenny, a protected historic building, presents both a challenge in retrofitting for energy efficiency and an opportunity to demonstrate best practice in heritage conservation by adapting this structure for future sustainability. These efforts may serve as a model for public sector, showcasing how protected buildings can be innovatively managed to meet modern energy standards while maintaining and enhancing their heritage value.

Recorded energy performance in 2023 showed a continued commitment to achieving the targets set for the Public Sector. Despite the challenges of adapting to a post-pandemic working environment and the significant expansion of activities, the Heritage Council has made some progress in improving energy efficiency and achieving long term emissions targets.

It is planned that new projects will make a substantial impact on both GHG emissions and energy efficiency. By 2023 energy performance had improved by 39.1% over the baseline. Total CO2 Emissions were 33,134 kg CO2 in 2023, a decline of 15% on 2022 and 18.6% on the baseline of 2016-18. However, fossil CO2 emissions (primarily due to natural gas heating) remain a challenge, at 21,811 kg CO2, 0.7% above the baseline, meaning a reduction of 51.4% is now needed to achieve the 2030 target.

The Heritage Council will continue to explore opportunities to improve the energy efficiency of its headquarters, while respecting the status of the building as an important historic structure, building on the 2023 energy strategy.

[2] Antaris Consulting (2023) Energy Audit Scheme (EAS) Report. Unpublished report to The Heritage Council.

2 Our People

2.1 LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

2.1.1 Statement Of Commitment

The Heritage Council recognises the critical importance of tackling climate change and the vital role that public bodies play in achieving Ireland's climate objectives. We are dedicated to conserving the environment and ensuring a sustainable legacy for future generations.

In alignment with its strategic vision, the Heritage Council is committed to addressing the needs and concerns of the heritage sector, playing a leadership role and collaborating with partners to meet government climate targets through all aspects of operation. The Heritage Council and Senior Management Team are dedicated to advancing energy efficiency and climate action.

2.2 GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE FOR CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY

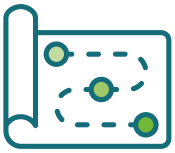
The Heritage Council has set up a leadership and governance structure to facilitate climate action at all levels in the organisation, with the aim to engaging the Heritage Council and all staff with the actions of the Climate Action Roadmap.

The following governance structures for climate action have been established:

- Appointed Head of Heritage and Climate Change, December 2022
- Established and resourced a Green Team, meeting monthly and reporting to senior management.
- Nominated a member of the Management Team as the Climate and Sustainability Champion with responsibility for implementing and reporting on the Mandate.
- Appointed an Energy Performance Office reporting to Senior Management Team
- Incorporated appropriate climate action and sustainability training into learning and development strategies for staff.
- Organised staff workshops to engage on climate issues and decrease energy and resource use.
- Scheduled climate action leadership training for senior management and members of the Council.

The Climate and Sustainability Champion reports to Senior Management Team on the activities and operation of the Green Team. The Champion reports directly to the CEO in relation to their role, responsibilities, and actions, to ensure appropriate planning, investment, and resource allocation

As part of the ongoing work, the Heritage Council commits to the following:



Climate Action Roadmap: The Heritage Council will use this Climate Action Roadmap as a strategic framework to steer future climate initiatives. By continuously improving infrastructure, services, energy efficiency and resource management, sustainable practices will be fostered among staff and stakeholders.

Supporting Government Initiatives: The Heritage Council fully supports the targets of the National Climate Action Plan and commits to working towards the targets of a 51% reduction in our carbon emissions by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2050.

Leadership and Accountability: The Heritage Council's senior management is dedicated to leading by example and fostering a culture of environmental responsibility. The Senior Management Team acknowledges that achieving meaningful climate action requires both vision and accountability.

The challenges posed by climate change are significant, but the Heritage Council is unwavering in its commitment to addressing them. This mission is undertaken not only for the benefit of the organisation but also for the heritage that the Heritage Council aims to safeguard, communities, and future generations. The Heritage Council is determined to position heritage conservation at the forefront of climate and environmental efforts, and pledges to take concrete actions in line with national climate goals.

2.3 GREEN TEAM

The mission of the Heritage Council Green Team is to recommend and implement practices to help reduce the organisation´s environmental footprint and to promote 'green' and wellbeing practices among employees and suppliers in order to achieve the goals identified in the organisation´s Sustainability Plans.

The Heritage Council Green Team is made up of employees who have committed to formally work together to:

- Reduce the organisation's environmental footprint;
- Ensure a healthy working environment;
- Enlist co-workers as partners in sustainable business practices including reducing waste, energy use, and water use; greening the supply chains and transportation; and improving the local environment.

The Charter for the Green Team is included in Appendix 2 Green Team Charter. Green Team membership represents each of the sections of the Heritage Council staff.

Position	Name	Roles and Responsibilities
Sustainability and Climate Champion	Catherine Casey	Head of Climate Change, Chair of Green Team
Energy Performance Officer	Ger Croke	Administrator - Building Operations & IT
Core Green Team Members		
Business Services Team	Vacant	Head of Business Services
Business Services Team	Tara Fitzgerald	Clerical Officer
Conservation Team	Triona Byrne	Architecture Officer
Research, Learning and Cultural Heritage Team	Lesley-Ann Hayden	Museum Standards Programme for Ireland - Programme Manager
Climate and Biodiversity Team	Meadhbh Bolger	Biodiversity Officer
Communications Team	Martina Malone	Communications Officer

Table 1 Heritage Council Green Team membership

2.3.1 Green Team Training

Green Team members have received dedicated training on the role and operation of a Green Team. This involved six modules delivered by Consulteco as part of the Green Teams National Training Programme, completed in September 2023.

The course delivered over six weeks aimed to help green team members to:

- Develop an understanding of the requirements of the role.
- Gain basic technical knowledge on resource management.
- Develop skills to communicate and promote sustainable action to colleagues in the workplace.
- Implement measures to lead change in your work areas which contribute to the organisation's environmental, social and business objectives.
- Maximise impact by working together effectively as a team.

The members of the Green Team are also encouraged and facilitated to upskill using online resources provided by SEAI including the following:

- Energy Academy
- Engaging People at Work Accelerator
- Energy Basics and Carbon Basics training

To date two Green Team members have completed Energy Basics training and one has completed Energy Basics.

2.4 ENGAGING OUR STAFF

The Heritage Council holds annual staff engagement workshops focussed specifically and initially on energy related emissions, and over time on wider climate issues and reducing organisational carbon footprint.

2.4.1 Staff And Heritage Council Training Plans

The Heritage Council aims to train staff at all levels on the importance of Climate Action and Sustainability in general and also specifically in relation to built, natural and cultural heritage. In May 2024 a full day training workshop was held for all staff on the topic of climate action. The workshop, designed in conjunction with Sustineo according to guidelines issues by DECC, covered the following areas:

- Introduction to climate change
- Policy, legal and other requirements
- How are we doing
- Workshop session – what does climate action mean to you
- Call to action

This will be followed up with detailed consultation with all staff in the course of the Climate Impact Assessment (see Section 6.1).

2.4.2 Senior leadership training

The Heritage Council will ensure that all senior management and Heritage Council members complete a climate action leadership training course. This training has been procured and designed, and will be delivered by Sustineo in November 2024. Among the issues considered in early engagement with Heritage Council and Staff has been how harnessing the wider sphere of influence of the Heritage Council can deliver for climate action. This will be explored and considered further in our Climate Impact Assessment and Sustainability Strategy, currently in production (see Section 6).

3 Our Targets

In accordance with the public sector climate action mandate, the Heritage Council's overall energy and greenhouse gas targets are:

- Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions by 51% by 2030
- Improve energy efficiency by 50% by 2030.

3.1 CARBON EMISSIONS ANALYSIS

In 2023, an Energy Audit was conducted for the Heritage Council headquarters, guiding ongoing and planned carbon reduction and energy efficiency measures. To accurately assess the climate impact of all Heritage Council operations, expert assistance has been secured (via the SEAI Public Sector Partnership Programme[3]), and a comprehensive climate impact assessment is underway. Full details will be included in the next update of the Climate Action Roadmap.

For this roadmap, carbon emissions and energy efficiency data from the SEAI Monitoring & Recording system, along with information from the energy audit, have been used.

3.1.1 Baseline

The baseline energy-related carbon emissions for the Heritage Council, based on data from 2016 to 2018, is 40,680 kg CO2, with 21,649 kg CO2 from fossil fuels. Given that the Heritage Council does not operate a transport fleet, these emissions are solely from a natural gas-fuelled central heating system.

3.1.2 2030 Target

The 2030 target is an absolute reduction target with no adjustments for changes in activity or demographics. It includes the fossil CO2 target and electricity emissions, based on the GHG baseline, minus the projected reductions from the decarbonisation of the electricity grid.

The Heritage Council's total CO2 target is determined by electricity consumption at the GHG baseline and the forecast rate of electricity decarbonisation up to 2030. As this rate depends on national infrastructure investment and is outside the Heritage Council's control, SEAI periodically recalculates the total CO2 target based on the latest emissions forecasts. Currently, Ireland's electricity network is expected to decarbonise by 77% from the 2016-2018 average to 2030, reflecting significant reductions in fossil fuel use in power generation.

[3] https://www.seai.ie/plan-your-energy-journey/public-sector/public-sector-partnership-programme/

The target recalculations incorporate the latest emissions forecasts to adjust for supply-side reductions from electricity decarbonisation. These recalculations do not affect the fossil CO2 target.

Following the publication of the Climate Action Plan 2024, SEAI has adjusted public sector greenhouse gas emissions targets to account for electricity grid decarbonisation. The Heritage Council's 2030 targets are now set at a 51% reduction in fossil CO2 emissions and a 79% reduction in electricity CO2, resulting in a total CO2 target of 14,685 kg CO2 (see Table 2). This target may be updated based on future decarbonisation rates.

3.1.3 Current Greenhouse Gas Emissions

In 2023, the Heritage Council's CO2 emissions were split between grid electricity (37%) and thermal natural gas (63%). Transport emissions are not included, as the Council does not operate a fleet. Staff travel emissions are reported separately to SEAI and may be integrated into future models.

Current emissions levels for fossil fuel (thermal natural gas) and electricity, compared to the baseline and adjusted 2030 targets and the further gap between current emissions and the 2030 target, are shown in Table 2.

Parameter	Baseline (kg)	2022 (kg)	2023 (kg)	2030 Target (kg)	Gap to target (kg)	Reduction needed to meet target
Fossil	21,649	26,954	21,811	10,608	11,203	51.4%
Electricity	19,031	12,072	11,322			
Total CO2	40,680	39,026	33,133	14,685*	18,449	55.7%

Table 2 Heritage Council Greenhouse gas emissions (kg CO2) by source baseline, recent years and 2030 target (Source: Heritage Council Data in SEAI Monitoring and Reporting System)

* Target revised by SEAI 2024 to allow for progressive decarbonisation of the electricity grid

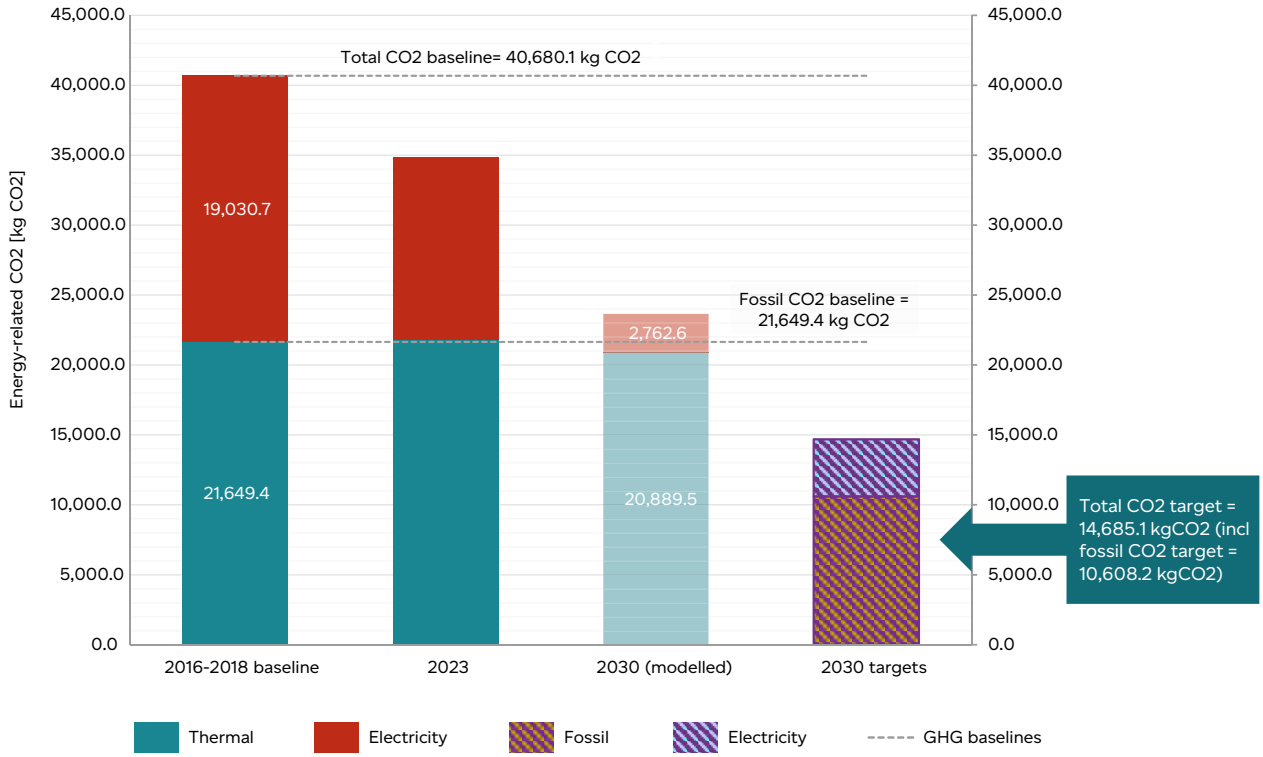


Figure 1 Overall Heritage Council Greenhouse Gas emissions: baseline, 2023 level and targets for fossil (thermal) CO2 and total CO2 including electricity. (Source: Heritage Council data in SEAI Monitoring and Reporting System)

Figure 1 shows the changes from the 2016-2018 baseline to 2023 compared to the projected 2030 targets, with a reduction in total CO2 emissions to 14,685.1 kg CO2 required by 2030, including a fossil CO2 target reduction to 10,608.2 kg CO2. This shows the progress made at national level in reducing electricity-related CO2 and highlights the need for further Heritage Council efforts to achieve the 2030 targets.

Figure 2 illustrates the trajectory of energy-related CO2 emissions from 2000 to 2030, highlighting significant reductions required to meet the 2030 targets. It shows historical data up to 2023, with a distinction between thermal (shown in brown)and electricity-related (blue) CO2 emissions.

The modelled projections from 2024 onwards indicate the expected decline in emissions with the implementation of the decarbonisation strategies described in this roadmap. The 2030 targets, aiming for a 51% reduction in fossil CO2 and a 79% reduction in electricity CO2 compared to the 2016-2018 baseline, provide a benchmark for future efforts. This visual representation underscores the importance of planning a greater sustained and strategic reduction in carbon emissions, particularly focussing on thermal energy. The model will be updated in future years as retrofitting and energy saving projects are planned.

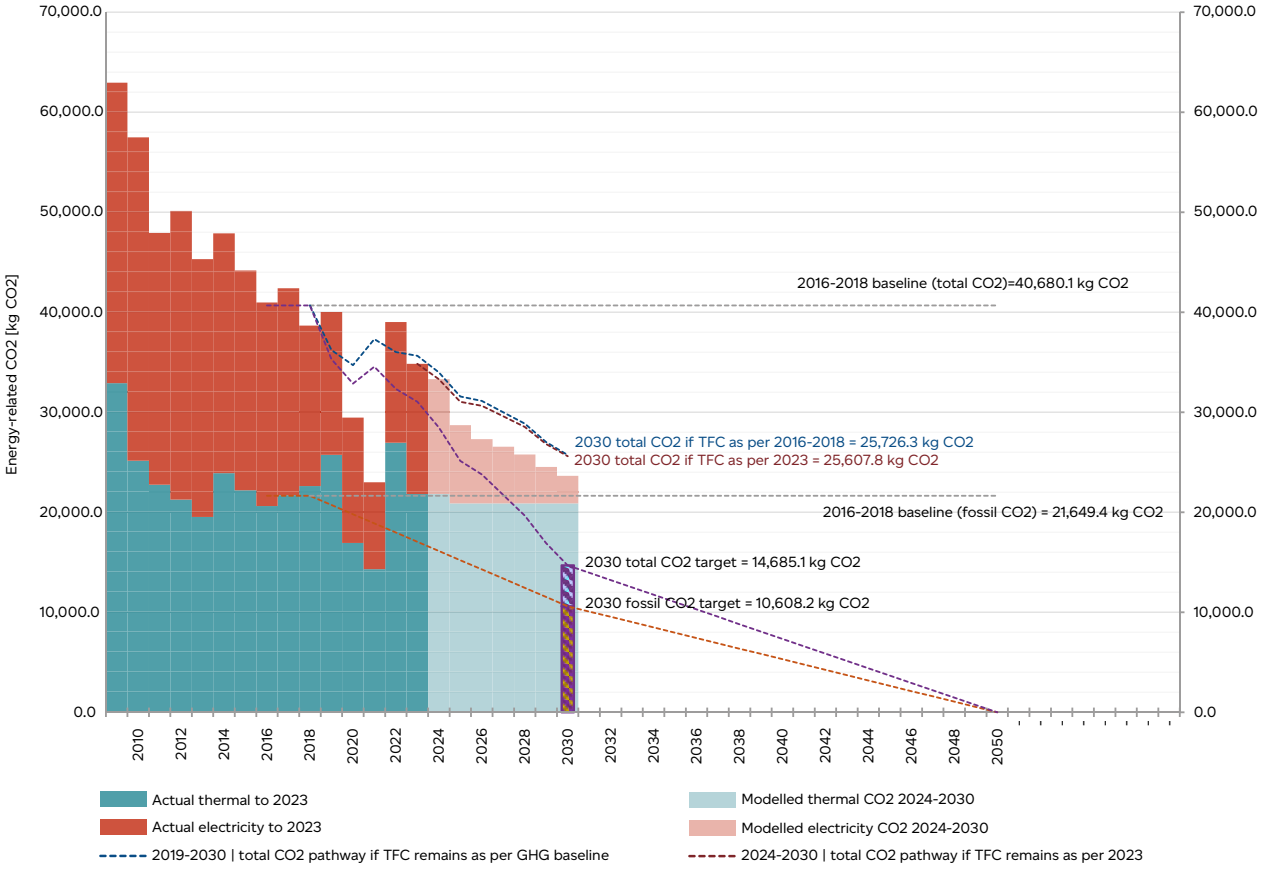


Figure 2 Total CO2 pathway and targets for the Heritage Council, including modelled reductions for future planned projects (Source: SEAI Monitoring and Reporting System)

3.2 ENERGY EFFICIENCY ANALYSIS

In 2009, the Government set a national target for the public sector to improve energy efficiency by 33% in 2020. Under the Climate Action Plan, this target was revised, with a new target set 50% improvement in energy efficiency by 2030. This means that, in addition to an absolute reduction in CO2 emissions as described in Section 3.1, the Heritage Council is also required to achieve an energy efficiency target of 50% improvement by 2030.

The Heritage Council's energy efficiency is a composite figure comprised of energy used (kWh) per unit (m^2) of usable floor area and the number of full-time employees. This is expressed as an Energy Performance indicator (EnPI) with the baseline year set at 100%. While the Heritage Council's property (floor area) has not changed, staff numbers have risen considerably in recent years, from 18 in 2018 to 25 in 2023.

Progress towards the energy efficiency target, tracked from 2009 to 2030 using the Energy Performance Indicator (EnPI) is shown on Figure 3. Starting at the baseline in 2009, a general downward trend in EnPI values is seen to 2023, signifying improvements in energy efficiency. Despite some fluctuations, where the EnPI values occasionally rise (eg following the period of closure during Covid in 2020 and 2021), the overall trend shows a consistent reduction. This indicates that, while there have been periods of varying energy efficiency performance, the general direction has been positive.

By 2023, Heritage Council energy efficiency had improved by 39.1% relative to the baseline. To achieve the 2030 energy efficiency target, energy performance must improve by another 10.9 percentage points over the coming seven years. The trajectory line on the chart highlights the path needed to meet this target, suggesting a steady decline in EnPI values is necessary.

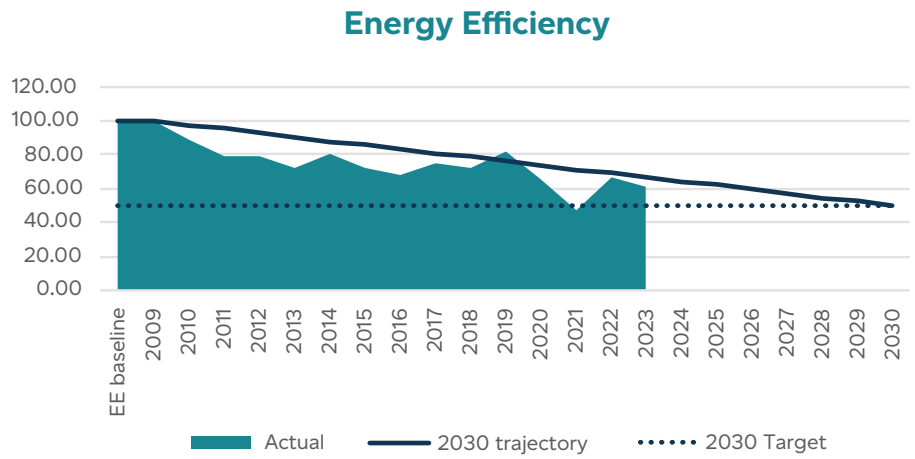


Figure 3 The Heritage Council's energy performance indicator, relative to the baseline and the 2030 target (Source: Heritage Council data in SEAI Monitoring and Reporting System)

3.3 ACTIONS AND PROJECTS REQUIRED TO MEET TARGETS

The Heritage Council faces a significant challenge in achieving the required targets. This is complicated by the organisation's occupation of a historic building with specific fabric and conservation requirements that make modern retrofitting techniques complex and potentially less effective. In addition, the stage of the Heritage Council's development means that it is currently undergoing a sustained period of growth, which puts additional pressures on resource use. However the Heritage Council is committed to achieving the required greenhouse gas emission and energy performance targets and detailed planning of how these targets will be achieved has commenced.

3.3.1 Energy

In 2023 the Heritage Council commissioned Antaris Consulting to complete an Energy Audit of our Headquarters in Kilkenny. This audit (Antaris Consulting 2023), ensures compliance with the European Union Energy Efficiency Regulations 2014, 2016 and 2019. The agreed objectives of the audit were to identify areas of significant energy consumption and determine, where possible, potential actions that can be taken forward by the organisation to reduce energy usage, costs and carbon emissions.

The audit identified that the largest areas in terms of energy consumption are Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC), Hot Water, ICT Equipment and Lighting (See Figure 4). As these are the largest energy consumers, they are likely to offer the greatest scope for energy saving opportunities.

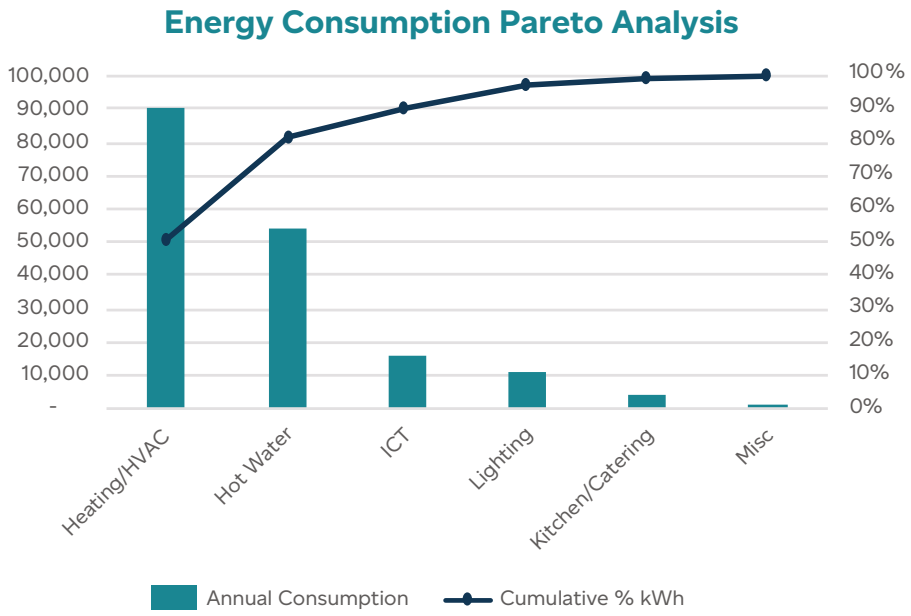


Figure 4 Pareto analysis (kWh) of Heritage Council energy use by utility type (Source: Antaris Consulting, 2023)

The audit identified a number of 'immediate to short term' actions and prioritised them according to their payback period. Table 3 shows the projects and actions identified as providing the greatest benefit to The Heritage Council:

Prioritised Action	Est Cost (€)	Energy Savings kWh / yr.	Saving (€/ Year)	CO2 Saving (T/Year)	Payback period (Years)
Improve overall energy management and monitoring.	€0	5,311	598	1.15	N/A
Change Set Points on BMS	€0	4,503	324	0.88	N/A
Replace halogen up- & down-lighters with LED equivalent	€2,800	3973	1276	1.31	2.19
Replace remaining fluorescent fittings with LED	€1,440	832	267	0.27	5.39
Fit 7-day digital timer to water coolers	€60	883	284	0.29	0.21
Install 9kW Solar PV array	€9,900	7,643	3,640	2.53	2.72
TOTAL	**€14,200**	**23,145**	**€6,389**	**172.61**	

Table 3 Energy Saving Opportunities Summary (Source: Antaris, 2023)

3.3.2 Renewable energy opportunities

Renewable energy can offer significant environmental and economic benefits, especially when considered as part of the energy hierarchy – whereby priority is given to reducing the need for energy and energy efficiently, prior to considering renewable energy opportunities.

The use of any form of renewable energy technology requires considerable thought and planning and it is important to identify and understand all the factors associated with the various forms of renewable technology. While the Antaris Energy Audit does not constitute a full feasibility study into the appropriateness of a renewable technology for The Heritage Council, a recommendation was made that consideration be given to installation of solar photovoltaic panels on the modern roof of the pavilion extension, as to the most appropriate type of renewable technology for the Heritage Council. A more detailed assessment considering the financial, social, architectural conservation and environmental implications would be required before this idea was progressed further, but it is included here as part of the Heritage Council's medium-term plans.

The Heritage Council's Energy Audit has highlighted where improvements are needed and suggested future projects to achieve targets. Whilst many of the recommendations are orientated towards infrastructure support and efficiencies it was noted that there are also strong potential savings available through changes in working practices and behaviours. These will be a priority in future staff training and awareness raising.

The following projects have been selected as priorities for implementation:

- Improve overall energy management and monitoring – implementation of recommended changes is ongoing
- Change Set Points on Building Management System - done
- Changes to lighting – A review of lighting options has been commissioned and recommendations will be implemented subject to funding in 2025-2026
- Renewable energy generation – installation of solar PV on the pavilion roof will be investigated

The changes proposed to the water coolers has been addressed through removal of three of the four coolers (with resultant reduction in both electricity and plastic waste) and their replacement with a single water filtration system in the staff canteen area. This was rolled out in consultation with staff through the Green Team.

In addition and upgrade and repair of Window fabric will be investigated in 2025, which will result in increased thermal efficiency of the building.

4 Our Way of Working

4.1 REPORTING

The Heritage Council reports annually on energy use and transport using SEAI's Public Sector Monitoring and Reporting (M&R) System[4]. As required under the Climate Action Mandate, the Heritage Council reports on the following in its Annual Report:

- Greenhouse Gas emissions and energy efficiency targets
- Implementation of the Public Sector Climate Action Mandate
- Sustainability activities
- Compliance with Circular 1/2020: Procedures for offsetting the emissions associated with official air travel.

The Heritage Council's most recent Annual report (2023) is available online[5]. It contains a chapter on climate reporting which includes all the required elements of the public sector climate action mandate in addition to our additional sustainability work and climate heritage actions.

4.2 ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

As a small public sector body the Heritage Council is not required to achieve formal environmental accreditation such as ISO 50001 (Energy Management Standard) or ISO 14001 (Environmental Management System), or to progress beyond ISO14001 to adopting EMAS (Eco Management and Audit Scheme).

The Heritage Council engages proactively with SEAI on an ongoing basis to ensure compliance in relation to energy management systems is up to date. As appropriate, staff will engage with relevant training provided through the SEAI Energy Academy and online briefings to ensure increased energy efficiency and reduced greenhouse gas emissions as far as possible.

4.3 RESOURCE USE

The Heritage Council is dedicated to reducing consumption and waste through a detailed and actionable sustainability strategy. This strategy, currently under development (See details in Section 6), will begin with a comprehensive measurement of our climate impact. Key initiatives will detail measurement of all our environmental impacts and setting targets using evidence-based results.

The Sustainability Strategy, due to be finalised in mid-2025 will address issues of waste, water, food waste ensuring that the Heritage Council is well placed to make rapid, measurable strides in sustainability and environmental responsibility.

[4] https://www.seai.ie/plan-your-energy-journey/public-sector/monitoring-and-reporting/
[5] https://www.heritagecouncil.ie/publications/annual-report

4.3.1 Digitisation of processes

Several projects are underway to enhance the digital capacity of the Heritage Council and to transition major work processes to digital:

- A digital strategy was completed in 2024 and will guide further investment in this area
- Finance and Grants Section procured a new modern online grants platform during 2023 and this is being rolled out on a phased basis through 2024. All grants from application to evaluation through to reporting stage go through the online grants system, with considerable reduction in printing, packaging and storage at all stages as a result.
- The Heritage Council's Museums Standards Programme in in the process (mid 2024) of transitioning to an online-only application, compliance and reporting system.

4.3.2 Paper use and printing

Due to ongoing staff engagement and awareness raising, printing and general resource use has reduced. Efforts to reduce paper consumption include moving grant review panels fully online, reducing the printing of hard copies of publications, and using document management systems and e-signatures.

4.3.3 Single use and other plastics

The Heritage Council has ceased the procurement of disposable cups, plates and cutlery within its staff kitchen facilities. Procurement of catering services will include requirements for packaging and food waste reduction and sustainability.

4.3.4 Water

Water conservation will be considered in the Climate Impact Assessment and Sustainability Strategy. In the interim, the total number of 4 water cooler stations previously in place in the building has been reduced to one water cooler and one mains water filter located in the staff canteen area. This will reduce the energy required o keep water cool as well as reduced water bottle plastic waste.

4.4 GREEN PROCUREMENT

Green Public Procurement (GPP) will play a key role in helping deliver Ireland's climate goals and national targets. The Heritage Council aims to fully comply with public procurement guidelines including implementation of Green Procurement, using the EPA Green Public Procurement Guidance and the Office of Government Procurement's online Green Public Procurement Criteria Search tool as resources. Training in green procurement for staff has been incorporated into learning and development strategies for staff and will be delivered as part of procurement training in 2024.

In future, consideration will be given to setting up a system to gather and record data on GPP implementation and to measuring the environmental and climate benefits achieved through the application of green criteria in procurement. It is planned that the inclusion of green procurement criteria becomes more embedded in the organisation's procurement system over the coming years. As contracting authorities and service providers within the public sector become more familiar with green procurement processes, a notable expansion in both the extent and depth of green criteria in expected. Simultaneously, it is anticipated that there will be an increase in the number of marks available for green criteria as part of the assessment process for RFTs issued by the Heritage Council.

4.5 LOW CARBON CONSTRUCTION METHODS

The Heritage Council does not currently have any direct construction projects underway. For future projects, the organisation will be guided by the requirement to use low carbon construction methods as far as practicable, for directly procured or supported construction projects.

In addition, the Heritage Council is actively exploring how the requirements of the Climate Action Plan to specify low carbon construction methods and low carbon cement material can be incorporated to construction-related grant schemes. This will be considered in detail as part of the climate impact study which is ongoing (due for completion late 2024).

5 Our Buildings and Vehicles

5.1 BUILDINGS

The Heritage Council's only property is the Headquarters at Áras na hOidhreachta, Kilkenny. As the building is not open to the public, a Display Energy Certificate (DEC) is not required. No new builds are currently planned. Energy and resource management in the building has been outlined in foregoing sections.

The Heritage Council's Building Stock Plan is attached in Appendix 3.

5.2 VEHICLES AND TRANSPORT

5.2.1 Procurement of zero emission vehicles

The Heritage Council does not currently own or lease any vehicles and does not currently have plans to purchase vehicles, so targets for fleet emissions are not relevant. One electric vehicle charging point has been installed at HQ and usage is monitored with a view to installing more points as demand grows.

5.2.2 Promoting active travel

The Heritage Council has implemented policies to promote the use of bicycles and shared mobility services among employees and visitors. To encourage bicycle use a dedicated covered bicycle storage facility is available at our office location which provides an area for staff or visitors who cycle to securely park their bikes.

The Heritage Council currently operates a hybrid working model, with attendance at HQ by most staff three days per week. As staff are not required to travel into the office every day, the majority have seen a significant reduction in their weekly commute, and an associated decrease in emissions associated with such activities.

For business travel the Heritage Council promotes the use to public transport where possible. Policies on payment of travel expenses aim to reduce the use of private cars where public transport options are available, with payment for travel by car to Dubin City only approved in exceptional circumstances. Bus rental is supported where larger numbers are being transported, rather than individual car use.

The Heritage Council has limited car parking space at our headquarters in Kilkenny. As a rurally based public body with staff travelling from across the midlands, east and south-east, the Heritage Council is conscious that not all staff and visitors have access to viable public transport to access our offices. Therefore while some car parking must be available for sufficient accessibility and emergency cases, the Heritage Council does not actively promote its car parking facility and there are no plans to extend this.

6 Our Wider Climate Action Plans

The Heritage Council is dedicated to enhancing its climate action commitments beyond the legal requirements through the comprehensive delivery of a Climate Impact Assessment and Sustainability Strategy. This initiative aims to integrate climate considerations into all aspects of the Council's operations and its sphere of influence.

This process has commenced with the appointment of Fehily Timoney and Co as consultants (August 2024) and will be complete by mid-2025, through the following steps:

6.1 DEVELOPMENT OF CLIMATE IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

The Heritage Council has commissioned expert assistance to research and develop an updated and expanded Climate Impact Assessment and Sustainability Strategy. This assessment will:

- Detail the specific climate impacts of the Council's operations on site and in its wider operation.
- Identify opportunities for positive actions to mitigate these impacts.
- Examine the wider operation of the Heritage Council through its areas of influences (Grant programmes, partnerships, heritage projects and initiatives) and consider how the potential positive impacts of these initiatives can be better harnessed, planned and measured.

6.2 ENGAGEMENT WITH STAFF, STAKEHOLDERS, AND PARTNERS

To ensure the successful implementation of this strategy, the Heritage Council will:

- Engage with staff to incorporate their insights and foster a culture of sustainability.
- Consult with stakeholders and partners to identify potential areas of influence, and to align the strategy with broader community and environmental goals.

6.3 COMPREHENSIVE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The strategy will include a thorough assessment of climate impacts across all areas of the Council's activities. This involves:

- Evaluating direct and indirect emissions.
- Assessing resource usage and identifying areas for improvement.
- Considering the long-term wider climate impacts of Heritage Council projects and initiatives, including the possibilities for positive impacts as well as reducing negative impacts.

6.4 SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

The Heritage Council's Sustainability Strategy will then outline specific measurable actions to reduce its environmental and climate impact and to boost positive impacts. This will include:

- Implementing identified energy-efficient practices.
- Promoting sustainable materials and reducing consumption and waste.
- Encouraging sustainable transport options for staff and visitors.
- Harnessing the wider sphere of influence of the Heritage Council in promoting positive attitudes and actions on climate and sustainability.

6.5 MONITORING AND REPORTING

The Heritage Council will establish mechanisms to monitor the implementation of the strategy and report on progress. This will ensure accountability and continuous improvement in meeting our climate action goals.

By committing to these actions, the Heritage Council aims to lead by example in the heritage sector, demonstrating that proactive climate action can go hand in hand with the conservation and promotion of built, natural and cultural heritage. Through this comprehensive approach, we will not only meet but exceed the legal requirements, showcasing our dedication to a sustainable future.

The Climate Impact Assessment will be published in late 2024, with the Sustainability Strategy to follow in 2025.

7 References

Antaris Consulting (2023) Energy Audit Scheme (EAS) Report. Unpublished report to The Heritage Council.

Appendix 1 Public Sector Climate Action Mandate

The Public Sector Climate Action Mandate applies to all bodies covered by decarbonisation targets, except for Local Authorities, Commercial Semi-State Bodies, and the School Sector. The mandate highlights the main climate action objectives for public bodies and will be reviewed annually. From December 2024, all public bodies are required to report on their progress with the mandate targets via the SEAI Monitoring and Recording System.

The following targets of the Climate Action Mandate 2024 are reflected in the Heritage Council Climate Action Roadmap.

1. Our Targets

1.1 Reduce energy related GHG emissions by 51% in 2030.

1.2 Improve energy efficiency in the public sector by 50% by 2030.

1.3 Update Climate Action Roadmaps annually within 6 months of the publication of the Climate Action Plan. Develop Climate Action Roadmaps if none are in place.

2. Our People

2.1 Establish and resource Green Teams, reporting to senior management, to become integrated drivers of sustainability in every public sector body.

2.2 Nominate a member of the Management Board as the Climate and Sustainability Champion with responsibility for implementing and reporting on the mandate.

2.3 Incorporate appropriate climate action and sustainability training (technical and behavioural, including green procurement training) into learning and development strategies for staff.

2.4 Organise staff workshops (at least annually) to engage on climate issues, including a focus on decreasing the organisation's carbon footprint.

2.5 Ensure all senior management (PO level or equivalent and above) and members of State Boards, complete a climate action leadership training course.

3. Our Way of Working

3.1 Report on the following in the Annual Report of the public sector body:

- GHG emissions;
- Implementation of the mandate;
- Sustainability activities;
- Compliance with Circular 1/2020: Procedures for offsetting the emissions associated with official air travel.

3.2 Using SEAI's Public Sector M&R System, public bodies are to report annually on implementation of the individual mandate requirements using a "comply and explain" approach.

3.3 Achieve formal environmental certification for large public sector bodies, such as ISO 50001 (Energy Management Standard) or ISO 14001 (Environmental Management System), with a view to going beyond ISO 14001 to adopting Eco Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS). Specifically:

3.3.1 All public sector bodies with an energy spend greater than €2 million per annum to achieve ISO 50001 certification by end-2024;

3.3.2 All remaining public bodies to implement energy management programmes as per SEAI's energy management guidance (S.I. 426 of 2014) and report to SEAI annually on its M&R system.

3.4 Green Public Procurement Implement Green Public Procurement, using the EPA Green Public Procurement Guidance and criteria/Office of Government Procurement's online Green Public Procurement Criteria Search tool as resources.

3.5 Construction

3.5.1 Specify low carbon construction methods and low carbon cement material as far as practicable for directly procured or supported construction projects from 2023.

3.5.2 Adhere to the best practice guidelines for the preparation of Resource and Waste Management Plans for construction and demolition projects for directly procured or supported construction projects from 2024.4

3.6 Food Waste

3.6.1 Measure and monitor the food waste generated on premises from 2024, using a standardised approach to food waste measurement set out in the EPA Protocol/Pathway.

3.6.2 All new contract arrangements related to canteen or food services, including events and conferences, to include measures that are targeted at addressing food waste, with a specific focus on food waste prevention and food waste segregation.

3.7 Paper

3.7.1 Review any paper-based processes and evaluate the possibilities for digitisation so it becomes the default approach. Eliminate paper-based processes as far as is practicable. Where paper must be procured, ensure that recycled paper is the default.

3.7.2 Measure and monitor paper consumption.

3.8 Water Provide suitable drinking water refill points for all staff and in any premises accessed by the public and measure and monitor usage of the refill points.

3.9 Single Use

3.9.1 Cease using disposable cups, plates and cutlery in any public sector canteen or closed facility, excluding clinical (i.e., non-canteen healthcare) environments, and in publicly funded advertising or broadcasting, where feasible.

3.9.2 Progressively eliminate all single use items within the organisation and from events organised, funded, or sponsored.

3.10 Other Materials

3.10.1 Support Ireland's Producer Responsibility Initiatives in the collection and recycling of products.

3.10.2 Use waste collection services that are segregated into a minimum of 3 streams – residual/general waste, recycling waste and organic/biowaste.

4. Our Buildings and Vehicles

4.1 Promote the use of bicycles (including push bikes, electric bikes, and cargo bikes) and shared mobility options as an alternative to car use among employees and visitors by creating and maintaining facilities (both inside and outside of buildings) that support such options, including secure and accessible bicycle parking, shared mobility parking, and charging stations, as appropriate, with a view to achieving the National Transport Authority's Smarter Travel Mark.

4.2 Phase out the use of parking in buildings that have access to a range of public transport services and active/shared mobility options for the majority of staff/visitors, while providing that sufficient accessible parking is maintained for those with physical mobility issues.

4.3 Display an up-to-date Display Energy Certificate in every public building that is open to the public to clearly show energy use.

4.4 The public sector will not install heating systems that use fossil fuels after 2023, in (1) new buildings, and (2) "major renovation" retrofit projects as defined in the Energy Performance of

Buildings Directive (EPBD) unless at least one of the following exceptions applies:

- The fossil-fuel use is only through using electricity from the grid.
- There is no technically viable non-fossil alternative (generally only related to applications for a purpose other than space heating).
- The installation of a renewable space heating system would increase final CO2 emissions.
- The fossil-fuel use is provided for backup, peaking, or operational purposes (and makes up less than 10% of annual heating energy).
- Where the direct replacement of existing fossil fuel heating is required for an emergency maintenance purpose.

4.5. In relation to existing buildings:

4.5.1 Public sector bodies and sectoral groups with a large estate should commence a deep retrofit of at least one building in 2024 in pursuit of the 2030 51% emissions reduction target. The planning of deep-retrofit building measures will be undertaken at sectoral level for homogenous sectors, e.g., in relation to the Civil Service, the OPW will plan the deep retrofit of Government Departments' building stock.

4.5.2 Public sector bodies and sectoral groups with a large estate should develop a portfolio building stock plan (including determining the buildings necessary for their activities), in line with guidance published by SEAI, by end 2024 to mobilise large scale programmes towards meeting the Climate Action Plan targets.

4.5.3 As part of the building stock plan, large public sector bodies and sectoral groups with a large estate should undertake data gathering and consider the long term (to 2050) retrofit key performance indicators to upgrade their building stock to Nearly Zero Energy Buildings or Zero Emission Buildings as outlined in the EPBD proposal and recast Energy Efficiency Directive.

4.5.4 Small public sector bodies should include a basic building stock analysis or statement as part of their Climate Action Roadmap, in line with the guidance published by SEAI.

4.6 Procure (purchase or lease) only zero-emissions vehicles from the end of 2022, enabling Ireland to go beyond the requirements of the EU Directive, amending Directive 2009/33/EC on the promotion of clean and energy-efficient road transport vehicles (EU Directive 2019/1161, the Clean Vehicle Directive) and act as an international leader in this area. An exception applies where the vehicle is exempt under European Communities (Clean and Energy-Efficient Road Transport Vehicles) (Amendment) Regulations (S.I. 381 of 2021).

Major manufacturers have indicated their commitment to increasing the availability of e-trucks to the market by mid-decade. However, it is acknowledged that it may not be possible to procure the desired number or variety of zero emission heavy-duty vehicles until the second carbon budgetary period (2026-2030). Depending on market developments, public sector bodies should, at the least, ensure to procure (purchase or lease) 'Clean Vehicles,' in accordance with the EU Clean Vehicles Directive, to meet their heavy-duty vehicle targets.

Public sector procurement contracts for delivery and haulage should specify zero-emissions vehicles where possible. As an enabler for the switch to zero-emissions vehicles and meeting Climate Action Plan targets, in 2024 public sector bodies with a vehicle fleet should develop a plan for installation of charging infrastructure in relevant locations. The plan should align installation of infrastructure with timelines for decarbonisation of the body's fleet. The plan should be included in the body's Climate Action Roadmap.

Appendix 2 Green Team Charter

An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council

HERITAGE COUNCIL GREEN TEAM CHARTER

The Heritage Council is committed to the highest standards of environmental protection, responsible use of resources and overall wellbeing.

This is a collaborative effort requiring participation from all employees to adopt environmentally sound operating practices that foster a culture of sustainability. This charter defines the mission, duties and responsibilities, functionality and membership of The Heritage Council Green Team.

MISSION STATEMENT
The mission of the Heritage Council Green Team is to recommend and implement practices to help reduce the organisation´s environmental footprint and to promote 'green' and wellbeing practices among employees and suppliers in order to achieve the goals identified in the organisation´s Sustainability Plans.

The Heritage Council Green Team is made up of employees who commit to formally work together to:

- Reduce the organisation's environmental footprint;
- Ensure a healthy working environment;
- Enlist co-workers as partners in sustainable business practices including reducing waste, energy use, and water use; greening the supply chains and transportation; and improving the local environment.

Since 2022, Heritage Council employees have collaborated within our organisation and with community groups to promote a sustainable business, environment and community. The Heritage Council encourages all employees to participate in the Green Team. Team members commit to reflecting and promoting Heritage Council sustainability work practices in the projects and programmes they operate.

PURPOSE
The purpose of the Green Team is to:

- Demonstrate leadership in environmental stewardship.
- Provide consistent and effective involvement in assuring the development and implementation of environmentally preferable practices that support goals and targeted performance levels identified in the organisation´s specific sustainability plans.
- Create and foster a common understanding of 'green' practices.
- Co-ordinate and align efforts among staff in all locations.
- Establish, measure and report goals (annually and longer term).
- Serve as a forum to address specific sustainability issues.
- Co-ordinate activities that promote green practices, educate, and provide a sense of community, such as Earth Day.

An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council

STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP

The Green Team consists of representatives from management and staff who serve as "green" champions within the organisation. Being all-inclusive is important to achieve wider participation.

Representatives currently on the Heritage Council Green Team (alphabetically):

Triona Byrne, Architecture Officer

Catherine Casey, Head of Climate Change

Ger Croke, Administrator- Building Operations & IT

Tara Fitzgerald, Clerical Officer

Lesley-Ann Hayden, Museum Standards Programme for Ireland- Programme Manager

Martina Malone, Communications Officer

Michael O'Brien, Head of Business Services

Lorcan Scott, Wildlife Officer

Representatives can be selected by line management or by self-nomination (voluntary). However, all representatives must have the permission of his or her immediate manager/supervisor. The Green Team aims to include representatives from all teams within the organisation.

MEETINGS AND ATTENDANCE

Meetings will be held in general every two months, and may be held more often as needed. If a representative cannot attend a meeting, s/he can designate a substitute to act in his/her absence. Agenda items for meetings may be proposed by any member. Meeting minutes including action items will be documented and distributed via MS Teams.

REPORT

The Heritage Council Green Team will prepare an annual report on its activities and successes, which will be distributed to Senior Management and the highlights communicated to all staff. Ongoing feedback on progress should be provided as necessary.

CORPORATE APPROVAL

I approve this Green Team Charter

Virginia Teehan

Virginia Teehan
Chief Executive

23/10/2023

Date

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Appendix 3 Building Stock Plan

This is the current Heritage Council Building Stock Plan (Steps 1 to 5) as registered with SEAI using the approved template.

M&R PB ID	PB-00197	Organisation	Heritage Council		
STEP 1	Total number of buildings Identified and classified			TOTAL	1
Identify and classify your buildings	Total number of sites/campuses identified			TOTAL	1
	Total floor area (m2)			TOTAL	1062
	Percentage in state ownership			Percentage	100
	Percentage rented or leased			Percentage	0
	* Classification 1		Office	TOTAL	1062
	Classification 2			TOTAL	
	Classification 3			TOTAL	
	Classification 4			TOTAL	
STEP 2	The SEAI Building Register has been completed for all buildings for			Status	Fully complete
Complete the building register	Heritage Council				
STEP 3	The largest energy using buildings have been identified and linked to the M&R and energy use data				Yes
Use M&R and other data to quantify energy use and identify buildings that are biggest users and emitters	Note the largest energy using buildings are those accounting for over 80% of the organisational heat use.				
	No of largest energy use buildings			TOTAL	1
	Heat usage of largest energy use buildings/ organisational heat usage			%	100
	No of largest energy use buildings that are leased			TOTAL	0
STEP 4	Number of buildings planned for exit - if known			TOTAL	0
Identify buildings that have been earmarked for exit in short-medium term	Total floor area of buildings planned for exit - if known			TOTAL	0
	Commentary (the degree to which the increase or decrease will impact your fossil fuel use)				
	No increase/decrease planned				
STEP 5	Preliminary future assessment of accommodation needs				
Undertake a preliminary assessment of your accommodation needs to 2030 & beyond					
	Accommodation floor area requirements to 2030			INCREASE	0%
				STATIC	Static
				DECREASE	0%
	Commentary (the degree to which the increase or decrease will impact your fossil fuel use)				
	No increase/decrease planned				

Building Stock Plan STAGE 1 Completed by Catherine Casey Email ccasey@heritagecouncil.ie

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