

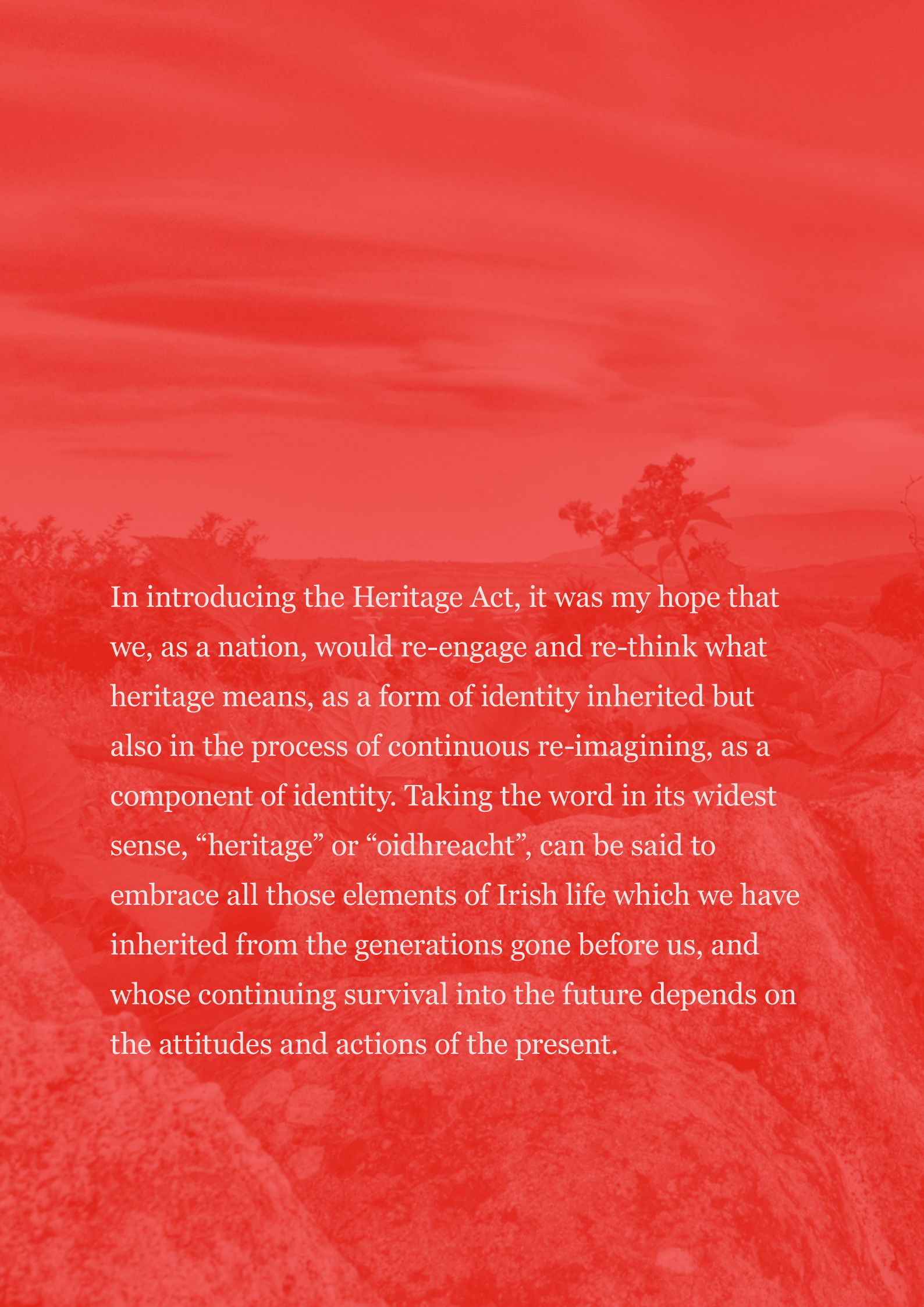
# Our Place in Time

Heritage Council Strategic Plan 2023–2028




An Chomhairle Oidhreachta  
The Heritage Council



The background is a photograph of a coastal landscape, heavily tinted with a monochromatic red color. It shows a rocky shore in the foreground, with some sparse vegetation and a few small trees. In the distance, there are rolling hills or mountains under a sky filled with soft, white clouds. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

In introducing the Heritage Act, it was my hope that we, as a nation, would re-engage and re-think what heritage means, as a form of identity inherited but also in the process of continuous re-imagining, as a component of identity. Taking the word in its widest sense, “heritage” or “oidhreacht”, can be said to embrace all those elements of Irish life which we have inherited from the generations gone before us, and whose continuing survival into the future depends on the attitudes and actions of the present.





Over the past two decades our concept of the word “heritage” has evolved somewhat and now the concept includes not only tangible heritage but also elements of our intangible living heritage such as songs, poems and language. When we speak of heritage today, we are talking about our interaction with the world around us, both real and abstract, our identity and our need to tell our own story in our own way.

Michael D. Higgins  
President of Ireland

*Extract from speech marking twentieth anniversary of the Heritage Council, 6th June, 2015*



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# Message from the Chairperson

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Our national heritage is a vital part of who we are, supporting our identity and sense of belonging. That is why it is so important that it is valued, cared for and enjoyed.

I am very pleased to present this new Heritage Council strategy, *Our Place in Time 2023-2028*. The strategy, which sets out our vision for the next five years, was developed collaboratively with inputs from our important partners and stakeholders who have a stake in protecting and raising awareness of our wonderful heritage assets. We are very grateful to everyone who contributed.

This strategy comes at a time of great threat not only to heritage but to the planet. Recognising this, a key cross-cutting priority will be actions in climate change and heritage. The Heritage Council will provide leadership in this area through research and policy advice, training and education, supporting efforts to tackle biodiversity loss and the provision of grant assistance. These actions will be key to inform and assist heritage custodians to face the challenges of climate change in the sector and will build on the programmes of work already delivered by the Heritage Council.

Work on the associated implementation plan has already been completed, with several key actions already being advanced. In progressing the implementation, the Heritage Council will continue to work collaboratively, in partnership with our strong communities, heritage organisations and government at national and local level.

I would like to thank those who have contributed to the preparation of the strategy. In particular, I want to acknowledge the trojan work of Sheila Pratschke who led the preparation process with the aid of a committee of Council and Virginia Teehan, Chief Executive Officer.

This strategy represents the ambitions of the Heritage Council at this significant time for heritage and I look forward to working with my colleagues on Council and the Chief Executive Officer and her team in the coming years to bring it to fruition and ensure that we can protect and celebrate our wonderful natural, built and cultural heritage.

Dr Martina Moloney  
Chairperson







# Our View of the Future

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**Our vision for the Heritage Council is supported by the ambitions that:**

- Ireland takes its place in Europe and the world as an exemplar country, committed to the principles of climate justice, conservation, heritage management, education and societal engagement;
- Ireland acknowledges the importance of heritage in all its manifestations;
- Ireland espouses the highest international standards in its quest for excellence in heritage care and practice.







# Who We Are: The Task Ahead

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**This document outlines the parameters within which we will lead, develop and expand the heritage sector in Ireland during the next five years 2023-2028.**

**Our mission is to:**

- propose local, national and international heritage policy;
- create and develop a research role with national and European reach in order to inform future policy, making the Heritage Council an effective advocate for tangible and intangible heritage;
- promote excellence in relation to the identification, protection, preservation and enhancement of our national heritage;
- collaborate effectively and proactively with all partners including in Northern Ireland, the European Union and with the international Irish diaspora;
- support the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage on the implementation of Heritage Ireland 2030;
- embed heritage in local and national identity, extending the heritage experience to every citizen, including new citizens and ethnic minorities, and welcoming immigrants and asylum seekers into their new communities.









# What We Do: Our Remit

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**As a statutory body, our mission and functions are defined in the Heritage Act 1995.**

As the Act outlines, heritage encompasses everything from the mountains to the sea, remnants of past civilisations as well as the astonishing variety of environment and habitat. Safeguarding it, and kindling a passion for it, is at the heart of everything we do.

The legislation gives us a mandate to:

- propose policies and advice for the protection and management of our national heritage;
- promote interest, education, knowledge and pride in, and facilitate the appreciation and enjoyment of this heritage;
- co-operate with public authorities, educational bodies and other organisations and persons in the promotion of the functions of the Council;
- coordinate all activities relating to the functions of the Council.

When the Heritage Act was amended in 2018, a further emphasis was placed on our obligations to:

‘Co-operate with, engage with, advise and support public authorities, local communities and persons in relation to the functions of the Council.’

The goals and aspirations, as set out in the Act, are the inspiration for the priorities listed in this Strategic Plan. They are made concrete by the vision of the Council members and the committed professionalism of our staff.

In accordance with its statutory functions, the Heritage Council provides evidence-based expert advice to ministers, departments and government. Supported by professional and meticulous research, we empower them with data and the arguments necessary to implement effective national policy.





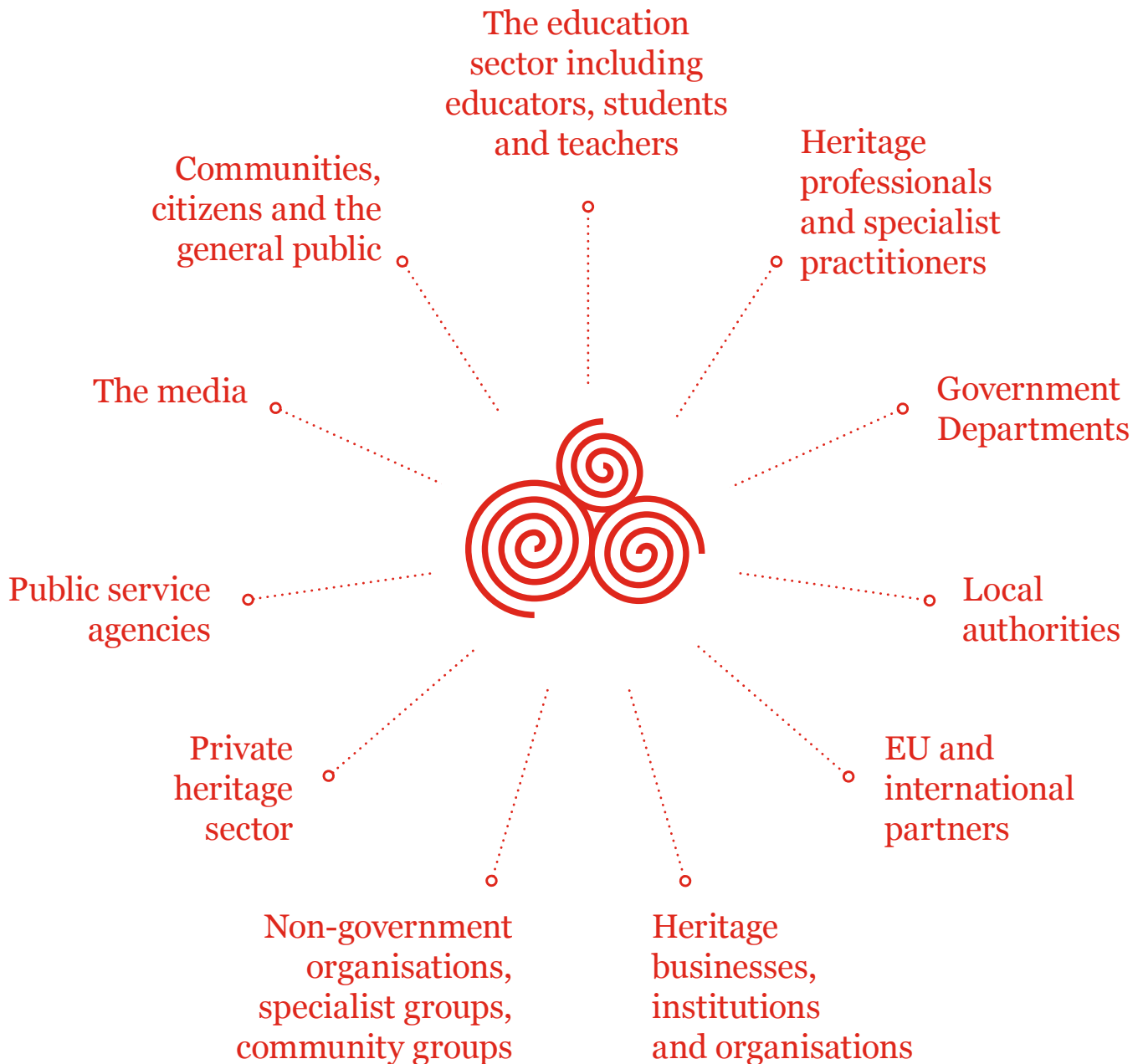
*The functions of the Council shall be to propose policies and priorities for the identification, protection and enhancement of the national heritage, including monuments, archaeological objects, heritage objects, architectural heritage, flora, fauna, wildlife habitats, landscapes, seascapes, wrecks, geology, heritage gardens and parks and inland waterways.*

Heritage Act, 1995, s.6(1)



# Our Stakeholders

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# Why We Do It: What We Believe In

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Heritage matters, and our approach to safeguarding and supporting Ireland's unique patrimony is underpinned by four core values. These define our approach and guide us as we articulate and plan new programmes and projects.



## **Integrity**

We embrace the ideals of integrity, accountability and transparency in all our activities. We commit to working honestly, collaboratively and respectfully with colleagues and partners.



## **Diversity and Inclusion**

Our 21st-century Irish nation is an exciting mix of ethnicities and origins. We delight in diversity, we embrace it as we seek to learn from other cultures. The reach of heritage includes all citizens, whatever their age, background, physical or emotional needs. We believe in a person-centred advocacy, in empowering communities by honouring their place in our land.



## **Collaboration**

We engage in meaningful partnerships with local authorities and a range of other collaborators in pursuit of our many shared objectives. We commit to working with the custodians of heritage in public and private ownership, and in the care of communities.



## **Care**

We commit to promoting an integrated approach to heritage protection, conservation and interpretation, bringing together natural, cultural, intangible and built heritage. This reflects our remit as outlined in the Heritage Act of 1995.

As a statutory public body, we espouse the high standards demanded by regulatory and legal obligations, and we are dedicated to acting always in a principled manner.







# Our Strategic Pillars

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In defining our vision for the next five years, we have taken a wide-ranging look at where we should be by 2028, and identified the steps that will get us there, together. These are consolidated into six strategic pillars.

Leadership and Stewardship

Climate Change and Biodiversity Loss

Research



A photograph of a forest with many vertical tree trunks. The trunks are brown and textured, with some showing signs of decay or peeling bark. The background is a soft-focus green, suggesting foliage and leaves. The lighting is natural, coming from the side, creating a sense of depth and texture.

Partnership

Communities

Education and Engagement







# Leadership and Stewardship

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We are setting out to mainstream heritage. To do this we need to be innovative in our approach, even if that means moving out of our own comfort zone. We need to challenge the silos that can put limits on our thinking. In particular, we must inject heritage into policy making and community planning.

Over the course of this Strategic Plan we will be a strong voice and advocate for heritage. Our leadership will be expressed through clarity of vision, evidence-based advocacy and support for excellence in conservation, sustainable management and heritage care.

## **Why this matters**

The Heritage Council's remit and our definition of heritage includes tangible aspects such as monuments, buildings, historic places, landscapes and the houses in which we live our daily lives; it encompasses collections and museums, archives, galleries, libraries; and the less tangible elements of oral tradition, folk memories and language. All cultural traditions, all elements intersect and contribute to a pluralist understanding of heritage.

**Discover the steps that we will take to get there on page 31**

*Climate change has become one of the most significant threats to all aspects of built, natural and cultural heritage, impacting their sustainability, integrity and authenticity, and their potential for economic and social development at every level. It would be foolish to imagine the practice of heritage remaining static while the world goes through the rapid and far-reaching transitions as evidenced by the climate crisis. While the heritage community must intensify its focus on appropriate action, so too must climate scientists and policy-makers engage with heritage and culture. Building bridges between heritage practices to nurture cooperation between experts and decision makers involved in the sectors of heritage, culture, sustainability, climate science and climate action will inspire and stimulate new approaches to the protection of our fragile world.*

Mary Robinson, Former President of Ireland,  
Chair of The Elders





# Climate Change and Biodiversity Loss

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This is the over-arching pillar which impacts on all of our activities. Climate change and biodiversity loss are sufficiently important to stand alone; but they are equally intrinsic to every other pillar in this plan. From strict scrutiny of our own organisation and its activities to the standards set for grantees, from the nature of our many partnerships to our understandings with community and citizen groups, we will apply the lens of climate change and biodiversity loss to inform our decisions. From the rich diversity of extraordinary objects that have been handed down to us, to the built environment, to the very shape of the land itself, to the creatures that share our home, Ireland's heritage is on the front line of battling the effects of climate change. As custodians and advocates, we are uniquely placed to react to the climate crisis. We pledge to use all the resources at our disposal to respond and to safeguard what we have while driving new research and thinking to meet the challenges of the future.

## **Why this matters**

We share our Government's vision of a country that is at the forefront of mitigating global climate change and is resilient to its impacts. The love of trees and wilderness lies deep in the Irish heart and Heritage Council leadership will help to shape responses which protect that landscape, coast and woodland. We will champion and secure our rich biodiversity. We will show leadership in helping to retrofit historic buildings, as well as safeguarding a biodiverse inheritance for our children. Knowing the past helps us to make wise decisions in the present, but our belief in the future is what gives dynamism and voltage to our policy development.

**Discover the steps that we will take to get there on page 33**





# Research

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Research is key to maintaining a true evidence-based vision for the Heritage Council. Our research will become an integral part of our engagement with society, adding value and richness to all aspects of our work. A research function gives us increased capacity to fulfil our policy advisory remit. Information generated through research is critical to the successful delivery of our objectives and the measurement of the effectiveness and impact of the heritage sector.

## **Why this matters**

Understanding the role of heritage as a key part of the national economy, local community, education, tourism, the private sector and more, is vital to our long-term vision. Developing a strong evidence base will support the heritage sector in demonstrating its role as a positive contributor to our society and economy. Our research will be designed to flesh out aspects of an overarching logic model. Our starting point will be a review of how our European and UK neighbours, with whom we share important identifiers, address these issues.

There is an urgent need to understand and monitor the performance of the heritage sector. This is challenging. Although individual organisations may construct their own performance measurement frameworks, there is an opportunity to enhance the evidence base for heritage by developing transparent and consistent ways to assess resources, activities, outcomes and ultimately, impacts. Any approach to success measurement must be generated and owned by the sector to ensure that it is effective. We propose further work to agree proposals establishing a framework which can be used to plan, gather, analyse and present key evidence.

**Discover the steps that we will take to get there on page 36**





# Partnership

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The Heritage Council wants to intensify its role in developing collaborations with those who make policy, those who lead communities, and individuals acting alone. Together we will champion heritage at both the national and local level.

## **Why this matters**

Heritage crosses organisational boundaries. It is in varied ownership and stewardship, or can even be embodied in different cultural memories. The heritage world is populated by a range of institutions, organisations, voluntary groups, professional bodies and private owners. It is essential that the wide number of groups and interests functioning within the sector operate in partnership. This will help ensure the best use of resources, enabling us to balance competing priorities, weigh up conflicting concerns and deliver a positive outcome for heritage.

As so much of our heritage is owned and cherished at individual and local level, there is a key role for communities to build capacity, to provide more tools and assistance for owners and volunteer groups. The management of our heritage has become increasingly professionalised over the last fifty years. This has been reflected in the expanding role of specialist advisers and agents. It is essential that such professional input is accessible to those who need it: be they builders, craftspeople, architects, engineers, archaeologists, curators, ecologists, archivists, conservators, surveyors or planners.

**Discover the steps that we will take to get there on page 37**





# Communities

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Individuals, groups and communities are vital participants in caring for and promoting heritage. We are determined to encourage and enable the development of community ownership for heritage, and to support the myriad of ways that citizenship and heritage intersect.

## **Why this matters**

Providing financial and educational supports for community initiatives enables people of all ages to understand, enjoy and appreciate heritage. Doing this makes people feel incentivised to take an active role in preservation and management. Communities are encouraged to engage with their own place. This leads to a sense of empowerment at the local level, which builds community cohesion and encourages active citizenship.

There is a large pool of enthusiastic volunteers working in heritage. We need to better harness their energy by empowering this sector so that it can deliver successful outcomes for everybody's heritage birthright.

Ongoing training and support for volunteers in the skills required to understand, record and promote heritage brings tangible results, which amplify the efforts of public sector bodies. Many organisations are involved in the delivery of formal education, and in community and volunteering activities around heritage. A large number have strategies in place guiding their work. Good practice will be shared, new partnerships built, and the best possible use will be made of complementary resources in a myriad of ways.

**Discover the steps that we will take to get there on page 39**





# Education and Engagement

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In order to share and celebrate our heritage as widely as possible we must continue to build on our successes to date and find new and innovative ways of communicating. We will deliver this key aim by adopting a broad approach to learning and engagement, by deepening understanding and promoting active involvement.

## **Why this matters**

We must make every effort to advance the heritage story. We intend to draw people more deeply in through teaching and doing. Providing formal and informal education about heritage enables people of all ages and from every class in Irish society to understand, enjoy and appreciate it. We wish to build community cohesion and encourage active citizenship, including for those who have migrated to Ireland in recent years.

To ensure the appropriate care, management and promotion of our heritage, we will support the many professionals and specialists working in the sector. We will work to upgrade existing skills training and we will design, deliver and seek to raise standards through accreditation of new qualifications. We must sustain a clear focus on capacity-building initiatives and collaborate with the third-level sector to deliver increased capabilities.

In the past, the Heritage Council has created and shared resources and information fundamental to civic engagement through heritage. We will routinely continue to share our learnings and impart our knowledge of best practice, through toolkits and other resources that empower those delivering education, nurturing participation and creating commitment.

**Discover the steps that we will take to get there on page 41**

# How We Will Achieve Our Goals

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## Leadership and Stewardship

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The Heritage Council will create the environment in which we can achieve our goals – for Ireland, for its places and landscapes, for its habitats and biodiversity, for its cities, towns and countryside. We will shape the structures to deliver on our vision and drive heritage-led regeneration.

We will create a vibrant heritage sector that is confident in its advocacy. We will advocate for increased investment in heritage management, conservation and regeneration. We will thus ensure its long-term protection and sustainability.

Throughout the period of this Strategic Plan we will:

- Provide advice and encourage the development of national policy in the following areas:
  - Climate heritage policy and biodiversity loss (see also our Climate Change and Biodiversity Pillar)
  - High Nature Value farming approaches to agriculture
  - The museums sector
  - Cultural restitution



- Provide advice and encourage the development of national guidelines for:
  - Heritage interpretation
  - Care of heritage in private ownership
  - Decolonisation of collections
- Support the implementation of Heritage Ireland 2030, the National Landscape Strategy 2015-2025, and the Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan for Built Heritage and Archaeology. We will coordinate with colleagues in the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage as a fundamental part of our strategy.
- Utilise our statutory authority to participate in the planning process in a strategic manner, by monitoring our built environment and making submissions to relevant bodies about heritage that may be impacted by planning and development.
- Propose policies for adaptive re-use in order to mitigate the carbon impact of land use, in particular in the construction sector. We will also advocate for the implementation of climate actions in the National Planning Framework, and for a zero-carbon built environment through carbon accountancy in planning decisions.
- We are determined to create an even bigger story. An advanced communications and public engagement strategy will be developed to advocate for heritage and to showcase it in all its aspects, both nationally and internationally. This will include an annual National Heritage Conference. We will also work with broadcasters to create programmes showcasing heritage-led approaches to buildings, collections, skills and crafts.

*Cultural heritage is tangible (e.g. monuments, historic buildings, cultural landscapes, archaeological sites, historic collections managed by museums, galleries and archives) and intangible (e.g. knowledge, performing arts, social practices, oral traditions and expressions) resources, inherited from the past and created in the course of time by the people and/or their interaction with the environment which today delivers a wide diversity of benefits to our societies, environments, and economies.*

(UNESCO 2003; 2017)



## Climate Change and Biodiversity Loss

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Putting Ireland at the heart of conversations about, and solutions to, the issues of climate change, the Heritage Council will advocate for conservation of our natural heritage while also encouraging vital new approaches. We will seek to position ourselves on the front line of fighting the effects of climate change and the protection of biodiversity.

We commit to developing a climate heritage plan that bridges the gaps between climate change science and climate change adaptation planning. Its main focus will be on the protection of heritage in all its aspects.



Throughout the period of this Strategic Plan:

- We will establish guiding principles that are environmentally sound and that will safeguard heritage for the future. These will ensure that the physical impacts of climate change adaptation and mitigation on our shared assets are managed according to best practice, so that their heritage significance is respected.
- The National Biodiversity Data Centre will be formally established as a legal entity to ensure its future as a key feature of Irish heritage infrastructure.
- We will, in collaboration with local authorities, the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the County and City Management Association, develop a network of Biodiversity Officers in each local authority.
- Training courses will be offered to build professional skills in Energy Renovation of Traditional Buildings, as we continue our partnership with the Technological University of the Shannon.
- We will work with colleagues to support the design of policies that protect high-carbon habitats and soils, as well as encouraging landowners and farmers to adopt farming practices that sequester carbon.
- Grant schemes will be established to encourage the energy retrofit of traditional buildings; for biodiversity protection; to raise awareness and initiate training for professionals and amateurs in climate heritage; and to encourage excellence in the heritage management of museums, archives and cultural organisations.
- We will seek to achieve greater recognition for repair and conversion as sustainable forms of development. These protect past investment of effort, energy and materials, and minimise the need for new construction materials and waste.
- We will publish a Sustainability Charter for the Heritage Council, defining our understanding of how we should work to ensure sustainable work practices. This will include the following:
  - A climate impact assessment of all our projects and programmes will be undertaken. This will identify where we can improve the sustainability of our work.
  - We will embed ecological values into decision-making on all programmes and grant schemes.
  - We will adopt environmentally sound practices in our headquarters Áras na hOidhreachta.





# Research

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Our Research Pillar will deepen, inform and strengthen our ability to provide policy advice to government and others; to frame our activities and grants programmes in a new and more focused way; and to ensure that decisions are underpinned by the best possible data.

Over the period of this Strategic Plan we will:

- Ensure that heritage is recognised as a valuable and integral contributor to the growing knowledge economy. This will guarantee that the impacts of heritage on economy and society will be measured and understood. By 2028 the evidence base demonstrating the social and economic value of heritage will be developed and well-grounded in collaborative research and evaluation.
- Accumulate a strong evidence base that will support the heritage sector in demonstrating its role in promoting economic growth. This will give heritage increasingly strong recognition as a positive contributor to our economy and society.
- Establish a 'Heritage Counts' programme that will define metrics to measure the value of heritage to our economy, society and environment, at both local and national level.
- Collaborate with practitioners, academics and others to support heritage science and the application of emerging technologies in a heritage context.
- Working with the Irish Research Council, the third-level sector and the EU, create a research programme supported by a research and innovation strategy. This will examine the effects of climate change and biodiversity loss on heritage in all its forms and propose mitigating solutions to address these urgent challenges.
- Create four funded fellowship programmes. Based in third-level institutions, these will support the development of a research-led national climate heritage policy, amplifying our strategic role in this area.
- Incorporate new research functions across all our activities. This will involve examining the organisation and its various sections; mapping where it fits in the heritage landscape; and demarcating its precise field of responsibility in relation to other bodies with commitments to heritage. It will also position Ireland's Heritage Council within a European framework.
- Assess grant expenditure relative to other agencies. This will ensure that investment in heritage is aligned with public investment in related disciplines so that heritage is protected and continues to be accessible.

# Partnership

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Alongside our National Cultural Institutions, National Parks and Government agencies, the vast majority of our heritage is in private ownership. Private owners act as custodians of heritage and it is essential to support them as they fulfil the responsibilities of such vital stewardship.

Over the period of this Strategic Plan we will:

- Create stronger links between the Heritage Council and a wider range of Government Departments, public sector bodies and heritage organisations sharing similar objectives. This will ensure that heritage benefits from being understood, resourced and delivered in a wider strategic context.
- Work closely with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, the Local Government Management Agency, the County and City Management Association and individual local authorities to enhance partnership and secure the protection of heritage and best practice in heritage management. This reflects the long tradition of collaboration between local authorities and the Heritage Council. Strengthening these links will enhance our ability to protect heritage and understand its cultural, social and economic value within our plural society.
- In collaboration with the County and City Management Association, we will implement the recommendations of the review of the Local Authority Heritage Officer programme commissioned by the Heritage Council and the Local Authority Management Agency, published in 2021.
- Improve advice, guidance and training for the independent heritage sector. This will make for an increasingly effective civil society, enabling more coherent action at national and local level.
- Prioritise our engagement with private owners. The Heritage Council will support owners in fulfilling their central role in managing heritage. A National Heritage Advisory Scheme will be developed. This will encourage private custodians to use heritage-friendly measures and approaches, with assistance from professionals.
- Deliver and increase funding for professional and networking supports for Local Authority Heritage Officers. This will also apply to other heritage professionals employed in local authorities and public sector bodies. These supports will include reviewing and broadening the scope of our Memorandum of Understanding with local authorities and developing structures that provide for increased employment and activity.



- Strengthen our links with local authorities in preserving the built heritage and natural heritage in rural areas, villages and towns; we will enhance funding for the Irish Walled Towns Network, the Adopt a Monument scheme and the Historic Towns Initiative.
- Working with Government Departments, National Cultural Institutions, the County and City Management Association and professional bodies, develop a feasibility study examining the sustainable development of local authority museums and archives services.
- Co-operate with the Irish museums sector to implement the Review (2020) of the Museums Standards Programme of Ireland and increase the funding for the training and professional development elements of this programme.
- Provide access for local communities and owners to the tools to better understand and fulfil their central part in managing heritage. This will build confidence in their rights and responsibilities, in commissioning professional advice, and in understanding the long-term benefit of employing skilled contractors.







## Communities

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Communities and networks are key custodians of our national heritage, in all its guises and forms. Recognising, supporting and strengthening them is a fundamental pillar of our plan.

Over the period of this Strategic Plan we will:

- Engage communities more actively in heritage as it affects their localities. We will do this through the increased support of Heritage Officers and other heritage services offered by local authorities.
- Audit our activities in order to identify how best to increase the inclusivity and accessibility of our work. We will ensure that the values of access, inclusion, sustainability and equity are embedded into our decision-making on all our programmes and grant schemes.
- Working in partnership with the Traveller community, ensure that Traveller heritage is acknowledged and preserved. To this end, we will develop a Traveller Heritage Strategy.
- Engage with the planning system on decisions around the management of town and village centres, as well as with the protection of locally based vulnerable heritage assets.





- Develop funding streams to support heritage management plans that empower communities to care for heritage and habitats. We will undertake a scoping exercise to identify opportunities for community stewardship of heritage resources and, as appropriate, build a programme of training and supports based on its findings.
- Increase funding for National Heritage Week as a key means to promote community-led engagement. We will continue to support citizen-science initiatives, such as those with the National Biodiversity Data Centre, the Discovery Programme, and others.
- In partnership with the National Museum of Ireland we will support the national extension of the Irish Community Archive Network (iCAN), a community-based public history programme. Beyond this, we will seek to strengthen our relationships with the National Cultural Institutions to develop other public and community heritage projects. We will also support the national roll-out of place-based learning (such as our work with the Burrenbeo Trust) and community-led heritage education initiatives (such as our work with the iCAN network).

# Education and Engagement

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Heritage is the story of people and place. Education and civic engagement are, and have always been at the heart of that story, and are the means by which we can best ensure its continuation. We conclude this Strategic Plan with an outline of the measures we will take to commit to this fundamental pillar of our activities.

Over the period of this Strategic Plan we will:

- Support and enable heritage-based education and civic engagement that is inclusive and accessible to all, whether that be by refining and expanding our existing national infrastructure and supports, or by creating new ones. We will develop a Heritage in Education Policy in collaboration with the Department of Education and Science and the teaching professions. To support this work, we will strengthen existing partnerships and develop new collaborations with the educational sectors at first, second and third levels.
- Grow our existing Heritage in Schools Programme in primary schools and expand it to second-level education.
- Offer greater access to continuing professional development and workplace learning for skilled and qualified heritage practitioners and craftspeople.
- Implement the All-Ireland Heritage Skills Programme collaboration with the Prince's Foundation and the Historic Environment Division Northern Ireland. These support those working in the construction sector in order to develop advanced skills as Master Craftspersons. This is an accredited programme.





- Continue to fund the Conservation Internships programme, run in collaboration with the National Cultural Institutions, to support training and upskilling for the conservation sector.
- Working with An Coimisinéir Teanga and Foras na Gaeilge, guarantee that the Irish language is adequately represented in our work and our funded projects. We will put in place steps to ensure that the Official Languages Act is fully implemented in all aspects of our work. We will also put in place measures to ascertain that the Irish language is clearly evident in our funded programmes and grant schemes.
- Support initiatives to develop routes to heritage careers that are accessible, inclusive, sustainable and fit for the future. As an example of this, we will create a biodiversity management module at an appropriate National Framework of Qualifications level to be integrated into heritage management training programmes.
- Scope the possibilities offered by a National Centre of Excellence dedicated to the preservation of traditional building skills, sustainability and innovation.



# Human Rights and Equality Public Sector Duty

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The Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty places a statutory obligation on public bodies to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and protect the human rights of those to whom they provide services and staff when carrying out their daily work.

During the lifetime of this strategy, the Heritage Council will carry out an assessment of the human rights and equality issues relevant to the functions of the organisation. This assessment will be published on our website.

We will identify positive actions which will address any human rights issues addressed by the assessment. These actions will also be published on our website.

We will report on the progress and implementation of actions in our annual reports from 2022 onwards.



# Consultation process

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In preparing this strategic plan the Heritage Council sought the input of a wide range of stakeholders through a series of moderated consultation workshops and individual consultations. The workshops were designed to facilitate the sharing of ideas from the heritage sector, subject specialists, community and civil society groups.

Seven workshops took place during spring 2022, which were a mix of in-person and online events and involved, in total, over 100 participants. One workshop was held with Local Authority Heritage Officers. Separate workshops and discussions were held with Heritage Council staff. The Rural Development, Community, Tourism, Culture and Heritage Committee (RCTCH) of the County and City Managers Association and the Heritage Division in the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage were also consulted.

The consultation process informed the issues and actions contained in this plan.

# Acknowledgements

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The Heritage Council wishes to thank all those who contributed to this document.

## The Heritage Council / An Chomhairle Oidhreachta

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Dr Martina Moloney, *Chairperson*  
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### **Our Place in Time Heritage Council Strategic Plan 2023 – 2028**

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#### **Credits**

**Cover Image:** Susan 'Lily' Yeats (1866-1949)

*Apple Trees*, 1940-1941

Silk thread embroidery on blue poplin

23 x 36

NGI.2010.14

National Gallery of Ireland Collection

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and Map Division







# LANDIÆ

VRATA DESCRIPTIO,

uctore Baptista Boazio.

HIBERNIÆ S. Patricius à Celestino PP. è Gallijs  
Anno ccccxxxiii. missus ad Christi fidem conuertit.  
cuius corpus in Dinenſi Episcopali ciuitate, DOVXX  
dicta, vna cum SS. Columba, et Brigida quiescit.





