

Conserve our Past Inspire our Future

Roscommon Heritage Strategy

2025-2029

(Draft)



Comhairle Contae
Ros Comáin
Roscommon
County Council



Oidhreacht Ros Comáin
Roscommon Heritage



Funded by

An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council

Roscommon County Council is a partner to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.

Reduced mowing at selected sites around the county has allowed native wildflowers to grow.



Cover Image: Roscommon Castle

Photo: Roscommon Tidy Towns

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Foreword from Cathaoirleach and Chief Executive

We are delighted to present the
Roscommon County Council
Heritage Strategy 2024-2029.

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Paschal Fitzmaurice

Councillor Paschal Fitzmaurice

Cathaoirleach
Roscommon County Council



Shane Tiernan

Mr. Shane Tiernan

Chief Executive
Roscommon County Council

1

What is Heritage?



Boyle Abbey

<https://heritageireland.ie/visit/places-to-visit/boyle-cistercian-abbey/>

1

What is Heritage?

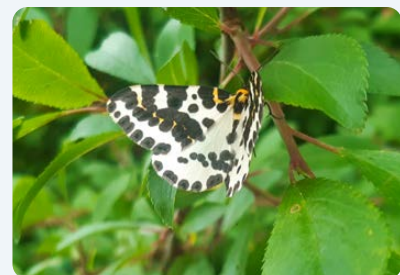
The Heritage Act, 1995 defines heritage as including monuments, archaeological objects, heritage objects, architectural heritage, flora, fauna, wildlife habitats, landscapes, seascapes, wrecks, geology, inland waterways and heritage gardens and parks.

The UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage broadens out the definition to include traditions, knowledge, folklore, oral history and much more that communities, groups, and, in some cases, individuals recognise as part of their cultural heritage.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity is short for biological diversity and is a term that describes the variety of life on earth. It includes the variety of all living things, includes a number of principal levels from genes, species, habitats and landscapes. It encompasses more than wild flora and fauna and includes all living species and the communities they create. It comprises all living things from plants, birds, and mammals, to insects, microbes and fungi and ecosystems such as bogs, forests, rivers, lakes, oceans among others.

Healthy ecosystems rich in biodiversity are vital for human health and wellbeing, underpinning food production and food security, giving us clean water, fresh air, protecting against climate change, providing modern medicines and enriching our lives and enriching our lives both culturally and spiritually.



Magpie moth, Ardlougher Aughrim
Photo: Alan Moran



Castlecoote House

Erection of Swift nest boxes, a recommendation of County Roscommon Swift Survey 2020, in association with BirdWatch Ireland.

2

What We Do



Thatching demonstration
at Elphn Windmill

County Roscommon Heritage Team

The Heritage Team of Roscommon County Council currently includes the Heritage and Biodiversity Officers.

The Heritage Officer post in Roscommon County Council was established in 2001 with the Biodiversity Officer post being established in 2024. The first County Roscommon Heritage Plan was adopted by Roscommon County Council in 2004, followed by a four year plan in 2012, and the last plan was published in 2017. The Heritage Team in Roscommon County Council is supported by The Heritage Council.

Roscommon Heritage Office celebrated 20 years of Roscommon Heritage Projects in 2021.



County Roscommon Heritage Forum

County Roscommon Heritage Forum was established in 2003. It is a non-statutory advisory group established by Roscommon County Council to provide advice on the preparation and implementation of a Heritage Strategic Plan.

The operation of the County Roscommon Heritage Forum is guided by the Heritage Council's Local Authority Heritage Forum - Guidelines for Establishment and Management (2024). The Heritage Forum will be complemented with the setting up of the Biodiversity Working Group in 2025 which will provide an opportunity to increase engagement with community groups, elected members and wider public on biodiversity related matters.

The Heritage Forum is composed of representatives from bodies and groups engaged with heritage at county and national level, such as Roscommon County Council, Inland Fisheries Ireland, National Parks & Wildlife Service, Local Authority Waters Programme, Teagasc, Roscommon Public Participation Network, County Roscommon Historical & Archaeological Society, Roscommon Environmental Network and Roscommon Local Community Development Committee among others.



Roscommon Abbey



Clonalis House



Volunteers carrying out historic graveyard recording in Kiltullagh graveyard under the direction of John Tierney, Eachtra Archaeology
<https://historicgraves.com>

The Purpose of this Heritage Strategy

County Roscommon Heritage Strategy sets out the high-level vision, mission and strategic objectives for the management and protection of heritage in the county.

The development and expansion of heritage services in the county includes a hierarchy of plans and will involve the publication of Local Action Plans, for elements of heritage such as biodiversity and other heritage disciplines as may arise. These action plans will set out specific objectives and actions for managing and protecting heritage within the context of the County Heritage Strategy.

The heritage strategy and associated action plans will ensure that the Heritage Act 1995 and national and regional heritage policy are translated to local actions and address local needs in a coordinated and effective way. The Heritage Strategy provides the context for Roscommon County Council to work with and support local communities and custodians.

Roscommon Castle, Loughnaneane Park, Roscommon.
There is seasonal access to the south west tower.

See <https://heritageireland.ie/visit/places-to-visit/roscommon-castle-south-west-tower/>



3

Guiding Principles



Anderson's Thatch Pub rethatched
with thanks to support from the Built Heritage Investment Scheme

3

Guiding Principles

The values of County Roscommon Heritage Strategy are informed and shaped by the values and goals of the County Roscommon Local Economic and Community Plan 2023-2029 (LECP) and Roscommon County Council's Corporate Plan 2024-2029 and the Heritage Council Strategic Plan 2023-2028 – Our Place in Time and the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030.

Therefore, in pursuit of this strategy, the Heritage Team and Heritage Forum with the associated working groups will adhere to the following guiding principles and values:



1

Leadership and Civic Responsibility

We will provide leadership, ensuring a cohesive, transparent approach to planning, preserving, and promoting heritage resources for the community.



2

Integrated Heritage Stewardship

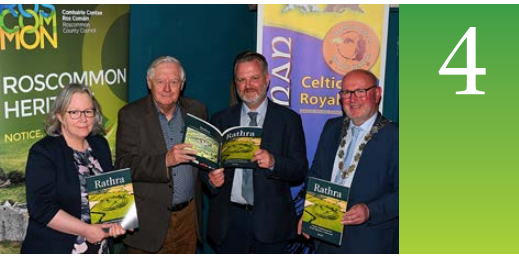
We will adopt a holistic approach, recognising the interconnectedness of tangible and intangible assets, and supporting sustainable conservation and enhancement efforts.



3

Community Collaboration and Support

We will engage, collaborate with and support local groups in their ongoing heritage work and projects, balancing community involvement with investment to create sustainable opportunities for heritage professionals and skill development within communities.



4

Collaboration and Partnership

We will work closely with stakeholders at local, regional, and national levels to realise shared heritage goals and ensure coordinated delivery of key initiatives.



5

Heritage as a Valued Resource

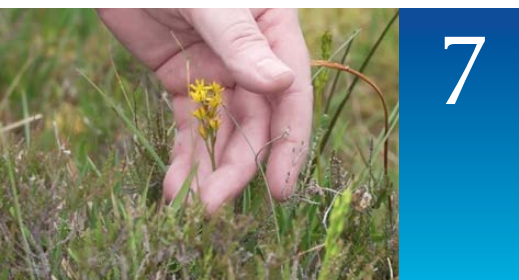
Our shared heritage assets hold aesthetic, cultural, economic, and social value. We will practice and encourage responsible stewardship, prioritising heritage conservation in ways that support the county's economy, well-being, and sustainable development.



6

Inclusivity and Accessibility

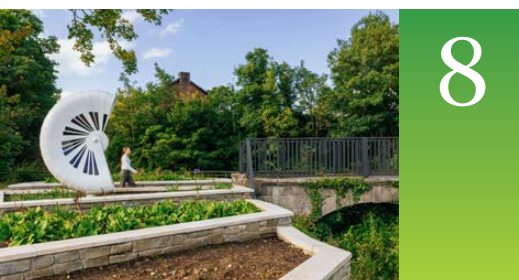
Our heritage is for everyone. We will work to promote inclusivity in all our work, aiming to provide access to cultural and natural heritage for people of all ages and backgrounds, fostering a strong sense of community and welcome for residents and newcomers alike.



7

Sustainability and Environmental Responsibility

In alignment with national priorities, we are committed to addressing biodiversity loss and climate impact through the Heritage Strategy. Our actions will reflect a commitment to sustainability, protecting our shared landscapes and ecosystems for future generations.



8

Quality of Life and Well-being

We will support initiatives that enhance Roscommon's quality of life, collaborating across cultural, arts and library programming, and health and wellness projects to contribute to a vibrant, inclusive, and age-friendly community.



9

Economic and Community Development

We will make the case for the economic benefit of local heritage and heritage related tourism, demonstrating that Roscommon is a great place to live, work, and visit.



10

Commitment to Sustainable Development Goals

Sustainability underpins all heritage initiatives and we will ensure that our heritage projects are designed to preserve Roscommon's resources and cultural identity, while supporting our environmental and economic goals.

For Information on Cemeteries in County Roscommon

Visit www.roscommoncoco.ie/cemeteries

Location of Register of Burials, Historical Information, Headstone Inscriptions etc. where available

Scan with your phone or go to www.roscommoncoco.ie/cemeteries

If you know of any information we can add or link to www.roscommoncoco.ie/cemeteries please email heritage@roscommoncoco.ie

Project funded by The Heritage Council & Roscommon County Council

An Chomhairle Oidhreachta The Heritage Council

ROS COMMON



Roscommon Cemeteries map viewer is an innovative way of updating and sharing available cemetery information and inscriptions worldwide.

Visit: www.roscommoncoco.ie/cemeteries

4

The Heritage Strategy in Context

Strokestown Park House,
Gardens & National Famine Museum

The Heritage Strategy in Context

The Policy Context

County Roscommon Heritage Strategy 2025-2029 is informed by and aligned with national policy: 'Heritage Ireland 2030' the national strategy for the protection, promotion and management of Ireland's heritage; 'Our Place in Time' the Heritage Council Strategic Plan 2023-2028; The 'National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030'; 'Project Ireland 2040', the 'National Development Plan 2023-2030', the 'Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan for Built and Archaeological Heritage' and the 'National Strategy for Vernacular Heritage'.

County Roscommon Heritage Strategy is aligned with local policy and supports the delivery of, 'Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028', Roscommon County Council Corporate Plan 2019-2024, 'Roscommon Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024 - 2029', 'Roscommon Culture and Creativity Strategy 2023-2027' and the 'Roscommon County Local Economic and Community Plan 2023-2029'. The county heritage strategy will incorporate the production of Local Biodiversity Action Plan aligning with the National Biodiversity policy.

Community groups play a hugely important role in caring for our heritage.

National Heritage Week is a great opportunity for them to showcase their work.



The Funding Context

The Heritage team is funded by Roscommon County Council and the Heritage Council. The Heritage Council supports the delivery of the annual action plan through the County Heritage Plan Projects, and from 2025, the County Biodiversity Plan Project funding schemes.

To meet growing funding demands and effectively respond to the needs of the local heritage sector, the Heritage Team must raise additional support from national sources, including the Built Heritage Investment Scheme, the Historic Structures Fund, the Community Monuments Fund, the Local Biodiversity Action Fund in conjunction with the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage and other funding opportunities as they become available. Funding opportunities also exist through the Roscommon County Council Culture Team under the Roscommon Culture & Creativity Strategy 2023-2027, supported by the Creative Ireland programme.

From 2019-2024 inclusive, **€2,016,100 has been secured under funding schemes supporting 166 local heritage initiatives in the county. This funding has leveraged €901,878 in match funding, giving a heritage spend of over €2,917,978.** Further funding opportunities exist under the Heritage Council's Historic Towns Initiative, Heritage Stewardship Fund and Heritage Organisations Support Fund. If the Heritage team expands, capacity to avail of these funding opportunities will increase.

This investment in heritage directly supports the local economy, funding the development and upkeep of community assets that foster a sense of identity, strengthen vital community connections, build social capital, and contribute significantly to social, cultural, and economic development.

Roscommon's heritage sector is proactive and continually growing, driven by dedicated community groups and individuals across the county. It is a significant and growing part of the local economy and the demand for investment is rising. Various local and national strategic documents, including the



Conservation works have been carried out on the south-west tower of Ballintober Castle, with thanks to funding from the Community Monuments Fund Scheme from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Culture & Creativity Strategy (2023-2027), Roscommon County Council Corporate Plan (2019-2024), the Heritage Council Strategic Plan (2023-2028), Heritage Ireland 2030, and the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030 all advocate for increased investment in heritage infrastructure, staffing, and project budgets.

The Heritage team and Heritage Forum will advocate for increased funding for this vital and growing sector, and will continue to identify and raise funding from national and other sources.

The Economic Context

Recent research commissioned by the Heritage Council¹ highlights the growing significance of heritage to the Irish economy. The heritage sector now contributes €4.6bn annually to Ireland’s economic output and supports 62,000 jobs across the country.

These results underscore the critical importance of local collaborations and the commitment of Roscommon Heritage Forum in implementing innovative and impactful heritage actions.



A strong heritage sector in County Roscommon is crucial for social, cultural, and economic growth. Much of the value of Heritage is hidden in the extensive voluntary work contributed by local community groups and organisations, whose dedication and expertise make a significant economic impact.

In 2023, Fáilte Ireland reported that twelve visitor attractions in Roscommon collectively welcomed 73,716 visitors, generating an estimated total spend of €11,352,264 in the local economy². Eleven of these sites are heritage or heritage-related, highlighting the economic importance of Roscommon’s heritage offerings. As the numbers clearly demonstrate, sustained tourism growth will benefit from effective management and conservation of heritage assets across Roscommon.

As the tourism sector expands, creating jobs and stimulating the local economy, the health of the heritage sector remains central, underscoring its importance in Roscommon’s overall economic development. It is worth noting that this does not include intangible benefits of people engaging with nature and biodiversity. The economic contributions from these sites reflect only those tracking visitor data, meaning that many other heritage sites remain unquantified. However, Fáilte Ireland’s findings reinforce the substantial economic value of Roscommon’s heritage sector:



It’s not just about money. Heritage has a social value. Heritage in all its guises plays a vital role in bringing people together to explore and protect their natural and built environments, fostering a strong sense of community and belonging. Volunteers make a valuable contribution in the work they do and volunteering has a positive impact on the individuals involved. Natural heritage provides a number of valuable ecological services, e.g. pollination of crops, clean air, spaces that aid personal physical and mental health. Research has shown the very presence of nearby historic places benefits residents’ quality of life, whether or not they participate in heritage activities³.

¹ The Economic Impact of the HERITAGE SECTOR in Ireland, The Heritage Council, November 2024
² <https://www.failteireland.ie/Research-Insights/Activities/visitor-numbers-to-attractions-dashboard.aspx>
³ https://historicengland.org.uk/research/results/reports/8972/CulturalHeritageCapitalandWellbeing_Examiningtherelationshipbetweenheritagedensityandlifesatisfaction



5

Key Achievements 2019-2024 inclusive

Phase 1 Conservation works carried out to
Cloonshanville Abbey with thanks to funding
from the Community Monuments Fund

5

Key Achievements 2019-2024 inclusive



166

Heritage Projects Delivered



33+ Partners



458

Heritage Office News Emails

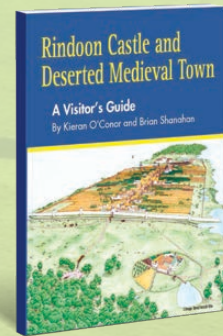
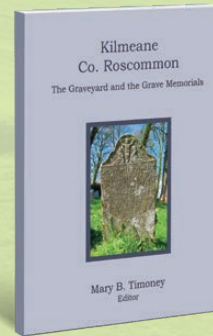
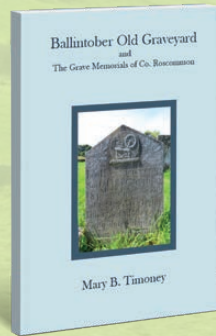
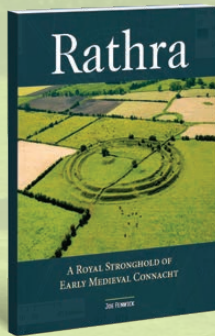


€2,016,100

Funding Secured
for Heritage Projects



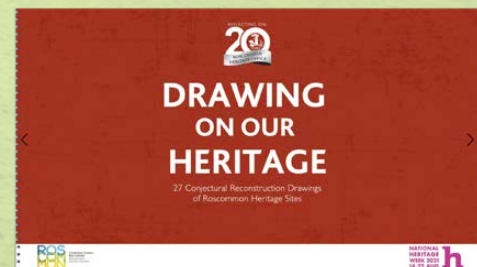
Publications



Publications are on sale worldwide from www.rathcroghan.ie/shop/

Conjectural Reconstruction Drawings

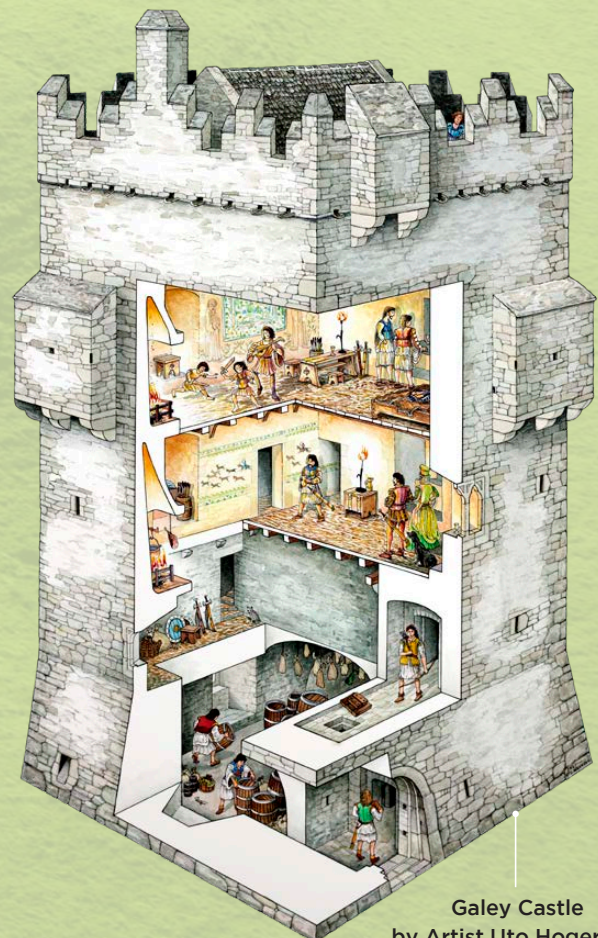
Conjectural reconstruction drawings have been commissioned for several sites around the county, these can be viewed in 'Drawing on our Heritage' at www.roscommoncoco.ie/flipper/mobile/index.html.



Rindoon by Artist Daniel Tietzsch Tyler



Knockranny Court Tomb by Artist J. G. O'Donoghue



Galey Castle by Artist Uto Hogerzeil.

Short Films

The 'A Guided Tour' series of short films features Roscommon Castle, Roscommon Abbey, Elphin Windmill and Carrowbehy Living Bog. Other short films include:

- Mosaics in Roscommon;
- Roscommon's Holy Wells, Customs and Cures;
- Roscommon Swifts;
- O'Beirne Mausoleum Conservation Project;
- A New Óenach in Royal Roscommon;
- Rahara Church Conservation project;
- Make a Mini Bug Hotel for Buzzbee with Dathaí.



Image: Pure Designs

All short films can be viewed at:

www.youtube.com/@roscommoncountycouncil5668



All Ireland Pollinator Plan

Roscommon County Council is a partner to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan since 2021.



Data Gathering

A survey of Swifts in Co. Roscommon confirmed 117 active Swift nest sites.

See www.roscommoncoco.ie/en/services/community/heritage/biodiversity-publications/roscommon-swift-survey/



A Survey of Holy Wells in Co. Roscommon gathered data on the status, condition, location, typology and archaeological features as well as the saints and holy well dedications, the pattern day, cures and folklore associated with Roscommon's holy wells.

See www.roscommoncoco.ie/en/services/community/heritage/roscommon%20holy%20wells/

Royal Sites of Ireland (including Rathcroghan) UNESCO World Heritage bid

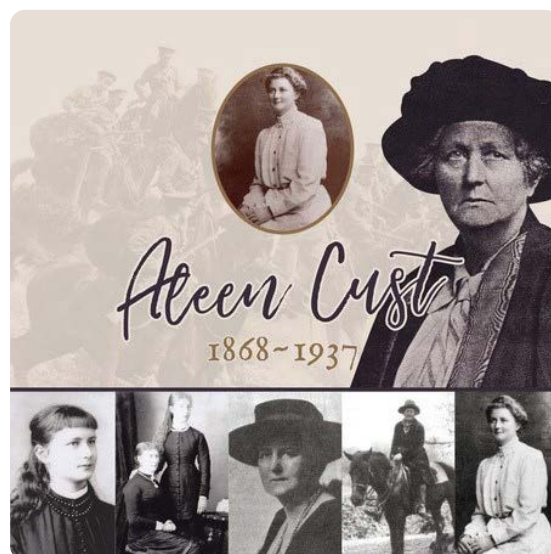
The Royal Sites of Ireland (including Rathcroghan) was added to Ireland's World Heritage Tentative List in 2022.

See www.worldheritageireland.ie/tentative-property/the-royal-sites-of-ireland/



Aleen Cust Commemorations

A collaboration between Aleen Cust Memorial Society, Galway, Roscommon and Tipperary County Councils produced a conference, exhibition, short film, play, postcard, podcast series, schools workbook and booklet in celebration of the first woman to become a veterinary surgeon in Ireland and the UK.



See www.roscommoncoco.ie/en/services/community/heritage/heritage/aleen-cust/

Roscommon 3D

Use of photogrammetry has provided a substantial collection of detailed 3D models for the county.

See <https://sketchfab.com/search?q=roscommon+county+council&type=models>

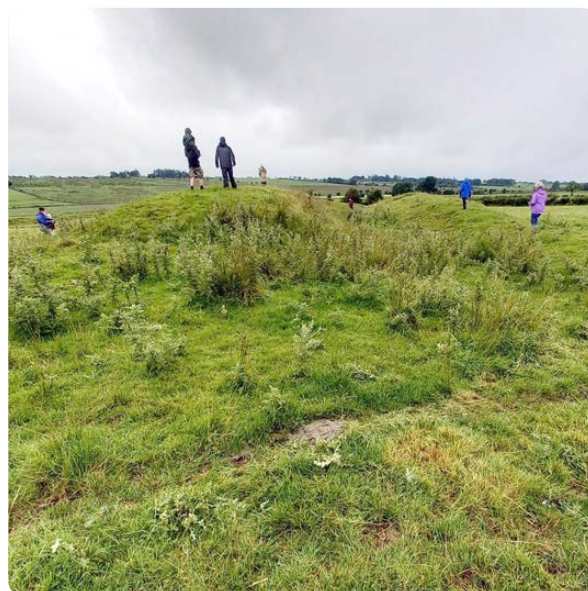




Community Archaeology

The community archaeology element of Farming Rathcroghan EIP 2019-2023 was supported by Roscommon County Council and the Heritage Council.

The community archaeologist collaborated with a range of stakeholders in addition to local residents and community groups; delivered farmer training events, schools workshops and hosted National Heritage Week events as a means of enhancing public awareness of good farming practice to protect our archaeological resource.



The community archaeologist hosted many public guided walks during National Heritage Week.

6

Preparation of County Roscommon Heritage Strategy



Members of Ballintubber Tidy Towns & Heritage, Ballintubber Cemetery Committee with the project team at the Owen O'Connor Mausoleum in Ballintubber following conservation works.

Preparation of County Roscommon Heritage Strategy

The preparation of the new County Roscommon Heritage Strategy began in February 2023 with a review of the membership and role of the Heritage Forum followed by an in-house review of the implementation of previous Heritage Plans.

The review found that over 160 projects were carried out from 2017-2024. The review indicated that performance indicators are important for tracking of impact and outcomes of the Heritage Plan, these should be agreed at the outset of the new cycle of the heritage strategy so that data can be captured as the plan progresses.

The Heritage Officer and Forum have met eight times, including a series of facilitated workshops, to review the development of the strategy. The development of the strategy has been informed by desk research into the local and national policy environment and by public consultation. The development process was in keeping with the design approach set out in The Action Plan for Designing Better Public Services (Gov. of Ireland 2023) and in accordance with 'Local Authority Heritage Plan Guidelines (2024), from The Heritage Council.

Phase one public consultation for the County Heritage Strategy was from March - May 2023, as part of the Roscommon Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP) Public Consultation. Findings from this public consultation informed the LECP Objective SCO3.1 'Continue to create and promote an increased awareness and appreciation of the natural, built and cultural heritage'.

Phase two public consultation, 'Have your Say on the new County Roscommon Heritage Plan', was carried out in January and February 2024. This was a call for submissions to an online survey and was advertised through local media, contact lists, council website and social media outlets. Hard copy submissions were welcomed. Transition year students



Children are encouraged to enjoy their heritage through events as part of National Biodiversity Week, National Heritage Week and www.heritageinschools.ie.

in second level schools around the county and members of Roscommon Comhairle na nÓg were also invited to have their say. 130 submissions were received.

Why is Heritage Important?



Findings from this phase of consultation show that heritage is of value to people for many reasons.

Heritage as a value for wellbeing is an area that lags behind the others and as such would benefit from further work.



Advice and funding towards the cost of conservation works are a support to owners of protected structures around the county. Conservation works at Ballymoe Station were supported under the Built Heritage Investment Scheme.



Themes the Heritage Plan should address

11%

Raising awareness and communicating about our heritage

15%

Conservation and caring for heritage sites (monuments, protected buildings, historic graveyards, natural areas etc)

9%

Engaging, working with and supporting communities to care for our heritage

5%

Climate change and heritage

6%

Biodiversity

9%

Recording Roscommon's heritage through research, audit and inventory

6%

Research, training and education programmes for e.g. traditional skills

6%

Engaging with young people and new communities

4%

Interpretation of heritage – digital interpretation, guides, signage etc

10%

Promote and celebrate local heritage for e.g. vernacular buildings, oral history, field names, local heritage collections

4%

Sustainable access and management

4%

Maintain, strengthen and develop heritage partnerships

3%

Heritage led regeneration

2%

Promote best practice

2%

Intangible cultural heritage

2%

Resourcing heritage

The strategic areas which should be prioritised in the Heritage strategy are conservation and caring for heritage sites (monuments, protected buildings, historic graveyards, areas rich in biodiversity etc.); raising awareness and communicating about our heritage; promote and celebrate local heritage for e.g. vernacular buildings, oral history, field names, local heritage collections; engaging, working with and supporting communities to care for our heritage; and recording Roscommon's heritage through research, audit and inventory.

Funding for heritage and Irish Language emerged as other suggested strategic themes to be considered. The biggest challenges facing heritage emerged as lack of awareness of heritage and lack of funding for heritage. The consultation found that there is good interest in taking part in a community heritage project or heritage training.



Roscommon Heritage Research Bursary awardee 2024 Pippa Tutschek delivering a talk on her research in the vaulted stables in Strokestown Park as part of National Heritage Week.

7

Vision, Mission and Strategic Objectives

The Royal Sites of Ireland are a group of six unique collectives of largely prehistoric monuments and sites associated in early medieval and medieval sites as the principal ancient sites of royal inauguration in Ireland. Rathcroghan is one of the royal sites of Ireland.

Photo Credit © Photographic Archive,
National Monuments Service, Government of Ireland

Vision, Mission and Strategic Objectives

Vision

Conserve our past and inspire our future, protect and celebrate the built, natural, cultural and intangible heritage of County Roscommon.

Mission

County Roscommon Heritage Strategy will:

- Record, conserve, restore and promote the built, natural, cultural and intangible heritage of the county,
- Increase awareness, appreciation, and enjoyment of our built, natural, cultural and intangible heritage for all.
- Promote collaboration and engagement.



Promoting national initiatives such as 'Pledge Your Garden for Pollinators' encourages engagement with heritage.

Strategic Objectives

1

Champion Best Practices

2

Foster Collaborative Partnerships

3

Promote the Value of Heritage

4

Integrate Climate Change and Biodiversity

5

Support Research

Strategic Objective 1:

Champion Best Practices

We commit to adopting and maintaining the highest standards in heritage management and conservation in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. Embracing best practices ensures Roscommon's heritage sector operates with high standards of care, conservation, and innovation.

By implementing the most effective and sustainable methods, we protect our built, natural, cultural and intangible heritage for current and future generations. Best practices also support transparency, accountability, and quality in heritage work, which strengthens trust with communities and stakeholders alike.

Over the course of this Heritage Strategy we will:

Subject to funding, Roscommon County Council will seek to appoint an archivist and an architectural conservation officer who would also form part of the Council's Heritage Team; thus ensuring enhanced coverage of crucial heritage protection functions for the future.

Support the preparation and implementation of Conservation Management Plans for heritage sites around the county.

Promote best practice in project development and delivery.

Develop supports to maximise engagement, such as relevant training, networking events, analysis and development, and project development.



Emergency conservation works on Cloonshanville Abbey have been informed by a Conservation Management Plan for Cloonshanville Cemetery.

Strategic Objective 2:

Foster Collaborative Partnerships

We will work with local, regional, and national stakeholders to deliver impactful heritage projects that resonate with the community. Collaboration across communities, government agencies, and private stakeholders is essential to achieving our heritage objectives.

By working together, we can leverage a range of expertise, funding, and resources to deliver heritage projects with a broader reach and greater impact. Strong partnerships amplify our capacity to celebrate, conserve, and promote Roscommon's heritage while fostering a shared sense of responsibility and pride in our cultural assets.



Building capacity for best practice and engagement through seminars and workshops to support initiatives such as the Roscommon Field Names Project.

Over the course of this Heritage Strategy we will:

Support the delivery and uptake of national funding schemes from the government departments, The Heritage Council and others.

Support Roscommon Public Participation Network and community groups around the county in building capacity for best practice and engagement.

Collaborate with stakeholders to deliver heritage initiatives such as 'Roscommon 100' an ambitious proposal to carry out a comprehensive survey of all historic graveyards in Roscommon County Council care, 'Roscommon Oral History Project' and 'Roscommon Field Names Project' and biodiversity related projects.

Support opportunities for engaging people of all ages and backgrounds to learn about, manage and care for our heritage.

Collaborate with academic institutions and other stakeholders, eg The Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO), various NGO's and National Biodiversity Data Centre on awareness raising initiatives, events, projects, access, interpretation, strategic planning, group facilitation, information and networking.

Strategic Objective 3:

Promote the Value of Heritage

We will communicate the importance of our built, natural, cultural and intangible heritage to raise awareness and appreciation across all audiences. Effectively communicating the importance of heritage helps build public awareness, understanding, appreciation, enjoyment, support and protection of Roscommon's cultural and natural resources.

By highlighting heritage's role in tourism, education and community identity, we embolden individuals and organisations to engage with and invest in preservation efforts. Consistent messaging from Roscommon County Council and the Heritage Forum reinforces heritage's value as a cornerstone of community wellbeing and economic vitality.

Over the course of this Heritage Strategy we will:

- Support National Biodiversity Week and National Heritage Week**

- Foster inclusive community engagement and public understanding of the importance of heritage through education programmes, exhibitions, communication of project and funding opportunities and outreach activities.**

- Build active public engagement through regular communications digital presence on the Roscommon County Council website, Youtube / social media and contact lists; media advertisements, press releases and interviews.**

- Support access to heritage information through the Irish language**



Supporting national initiatives such as National Heritage Week and National Biodiversity Week to promote the value of heritage.



Customs and Cures: Roscommon's Holy Wells Exhibition

Strategic Objective 4:

Integrate Climate Change and Biodiversity

Biodiversity is a fundamental part of Roscommon's heritage, reflecting the richness of our natural landscapes and ecosystems. Protecting biodiversity strengthens climate resilience, supports sustainable tourism, and aligns with our commitments to environmental stewardship in the face of climate change.

The physical impacts of climate change on our cultural and built heritage assets must be managed so that their heritage significance is respected. We will integrate climate change and biodiversity loss considerations into decision making.

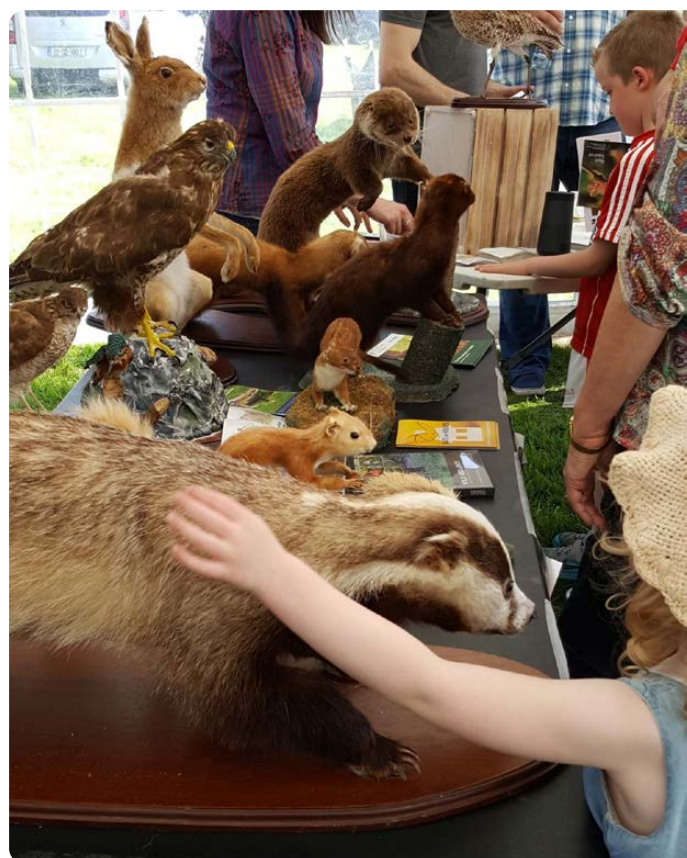
Over the course of this Heritage Strategy we will:

- Support the preparation and implementation of Roscommon Biodiversity Action Plan.

- Integrate cultural heritage, biodiversity, built heritage and climate action awareness in the management and maintenance of local authority assets.



Dragonfly workshop in collaboration with the National Biodiversity Data Centre.



The Biodiversity Action Plan will support community engagement activities.

Strategic Objective 5:

Support Research

Support and commission academic research, baseline surveys and data gathering necessary to inform evidence-based future policy, decision making and publications.

Develop and implement forward-looking strategies that ensure the sustainability and growth of the heritage sector.

Through proactive research and planning, we can allocate resources effectively, identify key priorities, and respond to challenges and opportunities as they arise.

This approach allows the heritage team to work more efficiently with the sector and make a meaningful impact on the county's cultural and economic landscape.

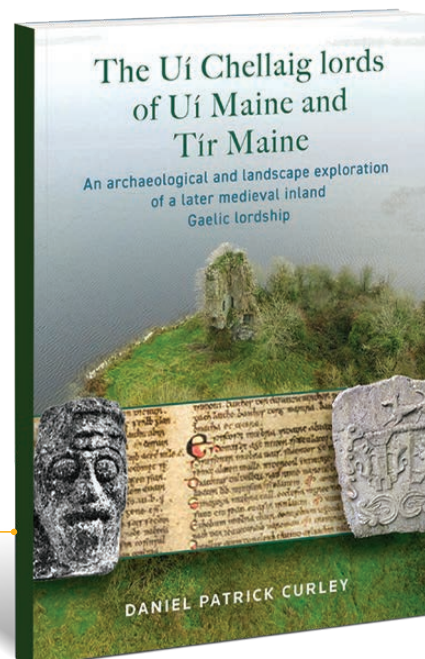
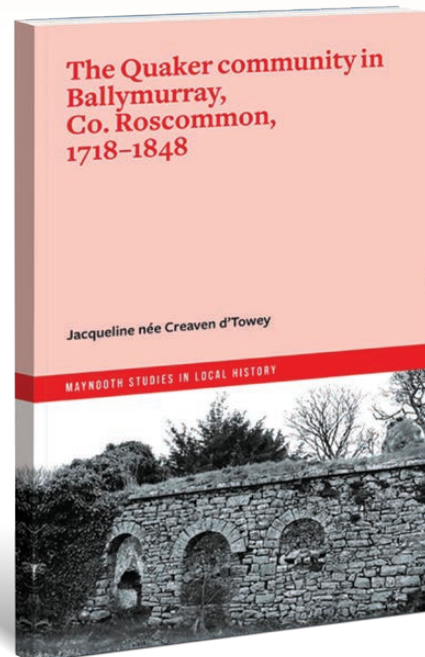
Over the course of this Heritage Strategy we will:

Support the national programmes such as Royal Sites of Ireland (Including Rathcroghan) UNESCO World Heritage bid and similar bids.

Support heritage research and data gathering initiatives, including the Roscommon County Council Heritage Research Bursary.

Some early stage researchers supported by Roscommon County Council Heritage Research Bursary have subsequently published their work, such as these publications from Four Courts Press.

Photo Credits: Four Courts Press



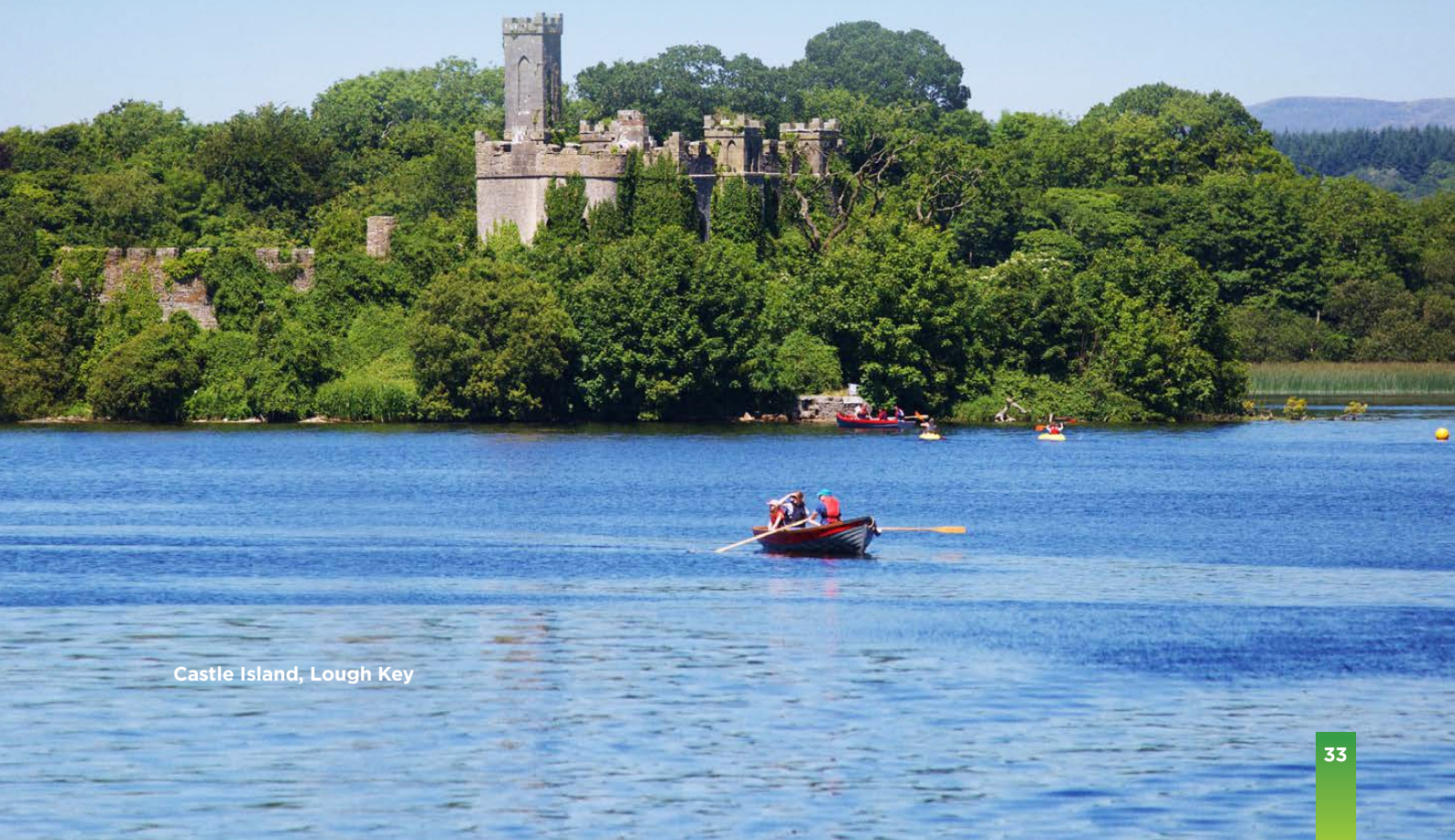


Carved head from
Cloonshanville Abbey

Photo: PJ O'Neill

8

Implementation and Monitoring



Castle Island, Lough Key

Implementation and Monitoring

Know Your Locality
course participants with
Dr. Stephen Mandal from
The Irish Heritage School Ltd.



The following strategic framework outlines our approach to monitoring, evaluating, and reporting on the projects and actions implemented under this strategy.

The framework will enable data-driven insights, support evidence-based decision-making, and facilitate continuous improvement by tracking the strategy's progress through clearly defined KPIs and structured reporting mechanisms. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are based on capacity to monitor, evaluate and report on quantitative delivery of the strategy.

1 Annual Planning and Budget Allocation

- The Heritage Strategy shall be accompanied each year by various Action Plans which indicate how the strategic plan will be actioned, and details who is responsible for each action, the budget, funding source, target outcomes and delivery date; by aligning with available resources and emerging priorities.

2 Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) Tracking and Baseline Establishment

- Baseline Data: 2024 will serve as the baseline year against which progress and growth will be measured. KPI's will be incorporated into the Roscommon County Council annual service delivery plan. KPI's will be set out under thematic area including training, events, funding schemes & public engagements.

3 Reporting and Continuous Improvement

- Implementation Reviews will inform resource allocation, project adjustments, and new initiatives for subsequent years.
- Continue to report under Roscommon County Councils corporate governance structures, annual service delivery plans and annual report to the Heritage Council and to the heritage Forum.
- Deliver on the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between The Heritage Council and Roscommon County Council outlining the framework for shared responsibilities in the delivery of the Heritage Officer and Biodiversity Officer programmes.

Appendix 1: Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

KPI	Measure	2024 Baseline
Operational		
Signed Service Level Agreement between Roscommon County Council and the Heritage Council	➤ In place (Y/N)	Yes
Current County Heritage Plan	➤ Plan in place (Y/N)	No
Heritage Forum in place and operating	➤ Heritage Forum in Place (Y/N) ➤ Number of forum meetings per annum ➤ Record of attendance at meetings	Yes 4 Yes
Annual Action Plan	➤ Biodiversity Annual Action Plan (Y/N) ➤ Heritage Officer Annual Action Plan (Y/N)	No Yes
Annual Report submitted to the Heritage Council	➤ Report submitted ➤ Biodiversity Officer (Y/N) ➤ Heritage Officer (Y/N)	Yes Yes
Training		
Participation in Heritage Council training & development programme	➤ Number of training events attended per annum	4
Funding Schemes		
Amount drawn down from accessible national funds by Heritage team	➤ Total direct heritage spend by Roscommon County Council	€588,271
Events		
Number of events for National Biodiversity Week, National Heritage Week	➤ Number of events per annum	54 x events registered for National Heritage Week
Public Engagements		
Public Engagements: news emails, social media posts, adverts, press releases, interviews, talks/ presentations	➤ Number per annum	147 x Heritage Office News emails and Social Media Posts
Up to date accessible information available on local authority Heritage Office and related websites	➤ Heritage section on Roscommon County Council website (Y/N) ➤ Number of updates per year	Yes 17
Best-practice/guidelines materials promoted per annum	➤ Number of materials/ guidelines promoted per annum	2

Acknowledgements

- John O'Brien, Consultant: Arts Culture Creativity
- Staff & Elected Representatives of Roscommon County Council
- The Heritage Council
- County Roscommon Heritage Forum

Heritage Contact Details

Heritage contact:

☎ 090 6637135

✉ heritage@roscommoncoco.ie

Biodiversity contact:

☎ 090 6632523

✉ biodiversity@roscommoncoco.ie

Rahara Cemetery Committee pictured at Rahara Medieval Church with the conservation project team.

See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3uUqD8o2tMI&list=PLVOpe_K0eKtk_eMP2H8XP2vEWv3Tio9f



#RoscommonHeritage

#LoveYourHeritage



The Táin March Festival, celebrating the epic tale of the Táin Bó Cúailnge or the Cattle Raid of Cooley, is a collaboration between the Táin March Festival Committee, Roscommon County Council & Rathcroghan Visitor Centre.

Photo Credit: Gerard O'Loughlin

☎ 090-6637100

✉ customerservice@roscommoncoco.ie

📍 Roscommon County Council,
Áras an Chontae, Roscommon F42 VR98

📘 RoscommonCountyCouncil

✂ roscommoncoco

📷 RoscommonCountyCouncil

📺 roscommoncountycouncil5668