

COUNTY CARLOW

HERITAGE PLAN
2024-2029

DRAFT



COMHAIRLE CONTAE
CHEATHARLACH
CARLOW COUNTY COUNCIL



Funded by

An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council

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Introduction

The Carlow Heritage Plan is a strategic plan that compliments other statutory and non-statutory plans that address matters relating to the heritage of County Carlow. Heritage consist of three inter-related parts, namely Built, Natural and Culture (Tangible and Intangible). Our sense of place is formed by our understanding of and engagement with our heritage as defined in Heritage Act 1995 as buildings, monuments, archaeological objects, wildlife habitats, landscapes, seascapes, wrecks, geology, heritage gardens and parks, and inland waterways. In 2003 UNESCO adopted the inclusion of intangible cultural heritage into the meaning of heritage. Intangible cultural heritage puts the person and their memories and sense of appreciation of the landscape around them into their sense of place.

The previous Carlow Heritage Plan 2003-'07 was approved by Carlow County Council in 2003. After a period with the absence of a Heritage officer, Carlow County Council appointed and actioned the current Heritage Officer to produce a Carlow Heritage Plan 2024-2029.



County Carlow Heritage Plan 2024-2029

The members of the Carlow Heritage Forum and Carlow Heritage Officer want to thank you for engaging with this Draft of the Carlow Heritage Plan 2024-2029.

The draft is based on the results of extensive public consultation. The results were compiled into a draft text that was discussed by members of the Carlow Heritage Forum and is available for public response.

We would like to thank those that attended the online facilitated workshops; in-person open meetings in each of the four County Library's and those who submitted written responses.

This strategic plan is ambitious and creative and reflects the views as expressed by the communities of County Carlow through public consultation. The plan consists of four strategic objectives and twenty eight associated actions. The actions in the plan will be delivered by the Carlow Heritage Officer with the assistance of the Carlow Heritage Forum, be subject to mid-term evaluation and funded by maximising available heritage funding streams.

Your response to this draft, will be part of the final stage public consultation that will result in the production of the final version of the Carlow Heritage Plan 2024-2029 for adoption by Carlow County Council in 2024.

The final text will be screened for Appropriate Assessment before being adoption by Carlow County Council.

The aim

The aim of the County Carlow Heritage Plan is: to raise awareness of the heritage in County Carlow in an inclusive and sustainable manner and to conserve, manage and safeguard our shared heritage for future generations.



The Purpose

The purpose of Carlow Heritage Plan is to provide a framework for the Heritage Officer, in collaboration with the members of the Carlow Heritage Forum, to implement a series of heritage actions. The actions were identified and articulated through public consultation in the production of the County Heritage Plan under a series of agreed strategic objectives. The plan enables the Heritage Forum and Heritage Officer to deliver on the communities heritage wishes and the means to review at any time where they are in the implementation of what the community have seen of as the main priorities for the heritage of the County.

The final review of the Heritage Plan once completed in 2029 will form a baseline survey of what actions were achieved and to assess what actions, if any, will require further steps in any subsequent iteration of the Heritage Plan for County Carlow. It is intended that the Heritage Plan will empower the communities to engage in meaningful manner with their built, natural and cultural heritage in County Carlow.



The Context

The County Carlow Heritage Plan is written in the context of national Heritage Plan, *Heritage Ireland 2030* and the Heritage Council Strategic Plan 2023-2028 *Our Place in Time*

The County Carlow Heritage Plan has been informed by Project Ireland 2040 and the National Development Plan 2021-2030, The National Peatlands Strategy 2015, the National Landscape Strategy 2015-2025, Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan for Built and Architectural Heritage, National Strategy for Vernacular Heritage and Government Policy on Architecture.

The Heritage Plan works alongside the Policy objectives of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028, Carlow County Council Corporate Plan, the Carlow Culture and Creativity Strategy 2023-2027, County Carlow Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2028, the emerging County Carlow Climate Action Plan 2024-2029, County Carlow Local Economic and Community Plan (2023-2029)





The process of producing

The public consultation that is the basis of this Draft Carlow Heritage Plan took place in late Summer of 2022. The process involved:

3 online workshops delivered an independent facilitator (appointed by Carlow County Council and funded by the Heritage Council)

4 in-person public workshops facilitated by the Heritage Officer in each of the four County Carlow Branch libraries in Carlow town, Muine Bheag, Borris and Tullow

Written submissions (electronic and paper) were invited throughout the first phase of the public consultation and accepted for consideration by the Heritage Office.

The draft plan was discussed and approved by the Carlow Heritage Forum and the Culture, Libraries and Digital Development, Tourism, Enterprise and Economic Development Strategic Policy Committee.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Four strategic objectives were established with a series of actions associated with each objective as a guide to aid the implementation of the Plan. The monitoring and mid-term review of the implementation of the Plan will be facilitated through the performance indicators outlined for each action.

OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE 1

COLLECT AND DISSEMINATE
BASELINE DATA THAT TELL
CARLOW'S HERITAGE STORY

OBJECTIVE 2

INCREASE AWARENESS AND
CHAMPION THE HERITAGE
OF COUNTY CARLOW

OBJECTIVE 3

BUILD CAPACITY THROUGH
ENGAGEMENT AND
PARTNERSHIP WITH
COMMUNITIES AND
ORGANISATIONS

OBJECTIVE 4

PROTECT AND SAFEGUARD
THE HERITAGE OF COUNTY
CARLOW



OBJECTIVE 1: COLLECT AND DISSEMINATE BASELINE DATA TO TELL CARLOW'S HERITAGE STORY

Action 1

Produce a popular geological publication to emphasize the results of the previously published Carlow Geological Audit (2004) and identify appropriate methods to disseminate information about the geological heritage of County Carlow to stakeholders and policy makers alike.

Performance Indicator: Production of stand alone publication and number of engagement events.

Action 2

Produce baseline surveys of built heritage assets in County Carlow indicative of the range of vernacular structures, industrial heritage and heritage street furniture and propose a sample for inclusion in the Record of Protected Structures for County Carlow.

Performance Indicator: Production of baseline surveys and number of stand alone publications/ information leaflets accessible around the County.

Action 3

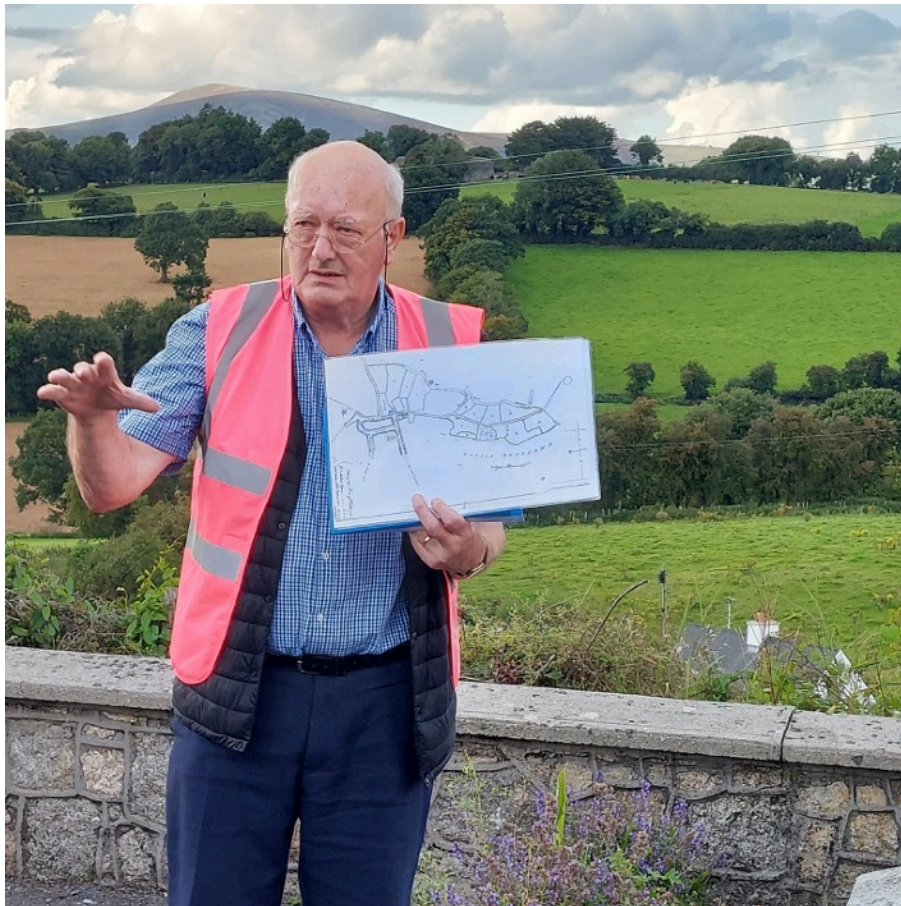
Collaborate with key stakeholders i.e. Carlow County Archivist and Carlow County Library Service, etc. to produce a County Archival Policy for digital and hard copy surveys, audits and videography for use by community groups.

Performance Indicator: Policy approved by Carlow County Council

Action 4

Collaborate with Climate Action Officer and key stakeholders (Carlow Culture Team) to record the cultural heritage story of the memories, initiatives and actions implemented by communities through the Climate Action Plan.

Performance Indicator: Relevant Climate Action Plan projects identified and implemented.



Action 5

Enhance people's re-engagement with the natural heritage of County Carlow by producing suitable surveys i.e Swifts, Barn Owls, Bats etc. and working to ensure the nesting sites are brought to the attention of the County Council through incorporation on the Council's Geographical Information System.

Performance Indicator: Number of completed reports; Number of public engagement events supported/ delivered on the report topic.

Action 6

Carry out a Heritage Audit of Historic Graveyards in County Carlow utilising a Citizen Science approach to recording graveyards. Incorporate the results into the existing Plot Box Data Base of Burial Records. Identify suitable structures that require short term conservation mitigation and implement phased actions if/as suitable funding is available.

Performance Indicator: Suitable Metric to capture public engagement at events/seminars/ workshops

OBJECTIVE 2: INCREASE AWARENESS AND CHAMPION THE HERITAGE OF COUNTY CARLOW (EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT)

Action 1

Raise awareness through information sheets/packs/videos that explain and outline the significance of vernacular built heritage in County Carlow with the aim of keeping such built heritage as 'living buildings'.

Performance Indicator: Public engagement metrics of circulated information in different formats.

Action 2

Promote sustainable and appropriate Heritage Tourism in collaboration with Carlow Tourism.

Performance Indicator: Sustainable and appropriate Heritage Tourism initiatives promoted



Action 3

Encourage greater awareness and appreciation of our heritage among school children through the Heritage Council's 'Heritage in Schools' programme and through the Carlow County Library Service.

Performance Indicator: Metric to measure engagement with secondary schools. Number of focused events that enable inter-generational engagement and learning opportunities.

Action 4

Collaborate with Carlow County Museum to input into their outreach programme and support their expansion of the digital content to enrich the visitor experience.

Performance Indicator: Meeting and engagement with Carlow Museum Board.

Action 5

Ensure the occurrence of regular meetings of the Carlow Heritage Forum at diverse locations within the County to engage and support the communities and heritage stakeholders.

Performance Indicator: Annual reporting of meetings and actions of County Heritage Forum at appropriate public events/seminars.

Action 6

Support the Heritage Council's main heritage data viewer, www.heritagemaps.ie by sharing relevant commissioned Carlow Heritage Office datasets.

Performance Indicator: Number of shared projects offered for inclusion.

Action 7

Collaborate with stakeholders on a series of cultural heritage oral/ videoed recordings of a diverse range of older members of the communities to collect and archive their stories, local knowledge and memories of times past.

*Performance Indicator: Number of interviews recorded and archived.
Appropriate metric to measure public participation and interest in developing a similar citizen science community project.*

Action 8

Explore the value with key stakeholders of the creation of an inter-county Blackstairs Mountains heritage of the landscape project.

Performance Indicator: Number of meetings, public engagement events and newspaper press releases.



OBJECTIVE 3: BUILD CAPACITY THROUGH ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP WITH COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONS

Action 1

Engage with organisations that can work with community groups to advise, assist and train interested property owners and community groups in the conservation of stone walls/ structures using local skills in public/private ownership (I.e. Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings)

Performance Indicator: Number of public and stakeholder meetings.

Action 2

Ensure final reports and grey literature (i.e. unpublished reports, etc.) for heritage projects actioned by the Carlow Heritage Office are accessible on the Carlow County Council Heritage webpage.

Performance Indicator: Metrics of website visitors, downloads, engagement and traction

Action 3

Support, organise and promote heritage events and digital outputs with local communities around the County, with particular emphasis on national and local calendar events i.e. Heritage Week, Culture Night, Biodiversity Week, Sustainable Goal Week, etc.

Performance Indicator: Number of events organised/supported annually. Participation/ Engagement measured where possible.

Action 4

Develop a strategy with key stakeholders in the county to promote the heritage of traditional crafts within the county, notably resources such as wool, timber and stone.

Performance Indicator: Metric of public engagement and communication literature at County and National level.

Action 5

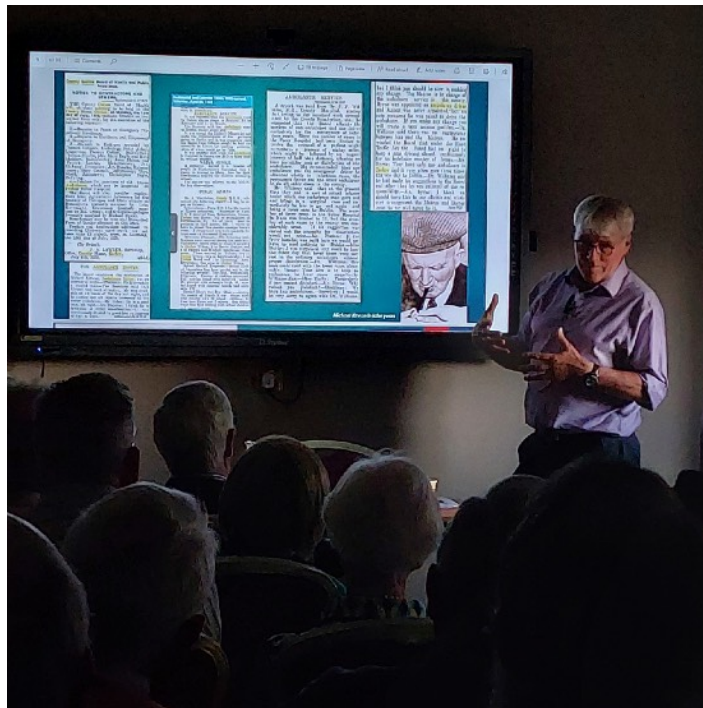
Organise an annual networking seminar to showcase completed/ongoing heritage projects from around the County and inform participants about the funding opportunities and pathways to enable/ strengthen their heritage projects/ aspirations.

Performance Indicator: Occurrence on annual seminar and participation feedback

Action 6

Strengthen engagement with the Carlow Public Participation Network to increase awareness campaigns about the heritage of the County and opportunities as they arise.

Performance Indicator: Number of public engagement events appropriate for inclusion of heritage



Action 7

Work with Irish Language stakeholders and organisations on the delivery of heritage events and projects that encourage the increased use of the language when celebrating our shared heritage.

Performance Indicator: Number of stakeholder meetings and metric to gauge the level of usage of Irish at collaborative heritage events.

Action 8

Produce a County wide 'Carlow Placenames Project' that will engage with communities within the county in the recording, research and archiving of placenames.

Performance Indicator: Delivery of Carlow Placenames Project within lifetime of the plan.

OBJECTIVE 4: PROTECT AND SAFEGUARD THE HERITAGE OF COUNTY CARLOW

Action 1

Collaborate on the implementation of County Carlow Biodiversity Action Plan and County Carlow Climate Action Plan, County Development Plan, Town Plans and Joint Urban and Local Area Plans.

Performance Indicator: Relevant actions as outlined in the County Carlow Biodiversity Plan and the County Carlow Climate Action Plan, County Development Plan, Town Plans and Joint Urban and Local Area Plans .

Action 2

Work closely with the Biodiversity Officer (once appointed) and Climate Action Officer and relevant external partners to ensure that Biodiversity and Climate Adaptation are key considerations that are designed into all applicable Heritage Projects.

Performance indicator: Ensure appropriate measures are incorporated into all applicable Heritage Projects.

Action 3

Input all baseline data from commissioned heritage surveys, audits and assessments into the Carlow County Council Geographical Information System for use in decision-making processes.

Performance Indicator: Number of heritage datasets included in the Carlow County Council Geographical Information System.

Action 4

Raise awareness of the Landscape of County Carlow by highlighting the Landscape Character Assessment of County Carlow and the role of Historic Landscape Characterisation.

Performance Indicator: Communication of suitable Case studies both national and international and how they safeguarded the heritage of the landscape assessed.

Action 5

Prepare Conservation Management Plans for a select number of heritage sites and archaeological monuments in County Carlow with the intention of leveraging funding to implement the conservation works as outlined in the conservation management plan.

Performance Indicator: Number of Conservation Plans prepared; Number of communication issued outlined the projects and Number of conservation project undertaken.

Action 6

Collaborate with stakeholders for the inclusion of heritage-led regeneration as part of planned regeneration projects.

Performance Indicator: Production of a heritage-led regeneration plan implemented for the enrichment, conservation and awareness of the heritage of the county.





The value of education and research in the Carlow Heritage Plan

Education permeates through our lives and resonates through our actions. The education lifecycle ranges from the school student engaging with their local heritage; conversations with neighbours and community members about how they interact with a shared landscape (local knowledge); to the learner in 3rd and 4th level education to the adult who wishes to understand more about their heritage and how they can get involved in maintaining it for future generations. Capturing that knowledge held within the diverse communities in County Carlow is the essence of the research opportunities that can arise and that can avail of existing and future inter-related heritage funding streams. The aim of the research undertaking by the Carlow Heritage Office is that the research is disseminated with all stakeholders and is available and fit-for-purpose to feed into any decision-making process.

The Carlow Heritage Forum

The present Carlow Heritage Forum held its inaugural meeting in May 2022 in Visual, Carlow. The membership of the Carlow Heritage Forum reflects a wide variety of stakeholders from across the County, including Elected Representatives; representatives of Departments of Carlow County Council that relate to heritage; Carlow County Museum; semi-state bodies such as Teagasc and Coillte; Public Participation Network (PPN); Volunteer organisations i.e. Carlow Birdwatch, Carlow Historical and Archaeological Society and LAWPRO.

The role of the Heritage Forum is to work with the Heritage Officer in the production and implementation of the Heritage Plan. The members meet throughout the year in locations around the County to keep informed and discuss activities, issues and opportunities relating to the built, natural and cultural heritage of the County.



Name	Organisation
Cllr John Murphy (Chair)	Carlow County Council Elected Representative
Cllr. Michael Doran	Carlow County Council Elected Representative
Cllr. Tom O'Neill	Carlow County Council Elected Representative
Cllr. John Pender	Carlow County Council Elected Representative
Cllr. Fintan Phelan	Carlow County Council Elected Representative
Shane Casey	Carlow County Council (Environment)
Kieron Comerford	Carlow County Council (Local Enterprise Office)
Pat Delaney	Carlow County Council (Head of Finance/ Director of Service)
Padraig Dooley	Carlow Historical and Archaeological Society
Brigid Fox	Public Participation Network
Mark Mahon	Coillte
Marianne Mulhall	Teagasc
Dermot Mulligan	Carlow County Museum
Brian O'Farrell	Carlow Chamber of Commerce
Fiona O'Neill	Carlow County Council (Community)
Eileen O'Rourke	Carlow Tourism
Ann Phelan	Local Authority Waters Programme
John Shortall	Carlow County Library
Lucy Stevenson	Carlow County Development Partnership
Eoin Sullivan	Carlow County Council Heritage Officer
Anita Sweeney	Carlow County Council (Planning)
Padraig Webb	Birdwatch Ireland (Carlow Branch)

CARLOW HERITAGE FORUM MEMBERSHIP

Next steps in the process

The Draft County Carlow Heritage Plan may be inspected in each of the four Carlow County Libraries (Carlow Central Library; Muine Bheag; Tullow and Borris), County Buildings, Athy Road, Carlow and both Tullow and Muine Bheag Civic Offices. A series of in-person public consultations, facilitated by Carlow Heritage Officer will take place in each of the four County Carlow Library's during February 2024. An online meeting will take place on Tuesday 6 February (pre-registration is essential). Register by emailing esullivan@carlowcoco.ie before 12 noon on Friday 2 February 2024..

Submissions can also be made via www.consult.carlow.ie before the deadline of Thursday 22 February 2024. Once this second stage of public consultation based on the Draft County Carlow Heritage Plan is closed, responses will be reviewed and the County Carlow Heritage Plan will be finalised and send for appropriate assessment screening, before being brought to Carlow Council Council for adoption by mid 2024.

Carlow County Council and the Carlow Heritage Forum wish to acknowledge the role of the Heritage Council in initiating the County Carlow Heritage Plan in association with Carlow County Council.

In particular, the Forum acknowledges the support of the Heritage Council through its funding of the Heritage Officer post, in association with Carlow County Council. The Forum also acknowledges the funding towards the cost of the preparation of the County Carlow Heritage Plan.

For further information please contact:

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