

PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday, 2nd March 2022

€1.75m in funding announced for 13 historic towns under Historic Towns Initiative

HTI is a joint initiative between the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Heritage Council

The Heritage Council, along with Ministers Malcolm Noonan TD, and Minister Darragh O'Brien TD today (02.03.22) announced that 13 historic towns will share €1.75m funding under the 2022 Historic Towns Initiative.

The €1.75m in capital funding will help to provide jobs through heritage-led regeneration and will aid the rebuilding of local economies with heritage as a focal point. Today's announcement follows the launch last week by Minister Noonan of Heritage Ireland 2030, the new national heritage plan, which seeks to strengthen the management and protection of Ireland's built, cultural and natural heritage and provide supports to those responsible for caring for that heritage.

A joint initiative between the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, and the Heritage Council, this year's scheme follows on from highly successful projects during 2018 to 2021. A new aspect of the HTI this year was a call for proposals that encourage the specific re-use of historic buildings. The awards in Monaghan town, Enniscorthy and Tipperary town will address residential and business reuse.

Funding will be awarded to the relevant local authorities for eight conservation projects in:

- Listowel, Co Kerry.
- Ballyshannon, Co Donegal.
- Ballina, Co Mayo.
- Macroom, Co Cork.
- Tipperary town, Co Tipperary.
- Naas, Co Kildare.
- Monaghan town, Co Monaghan.
- Enniscorthy, Co Wexford.

For the first time under this programme, funding has been awarded to the relevant local authorities for five heritage-led regeneration plans in:

- Callan, Co Kilkenny.
- Drogheda, Co Louth.
- Wexford, Co Wexford.
- Ballymote, Co Sligo.
- Carlow, Co Carlow.

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Commenting, Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform, Malcolm Noonan TD said: "As set out in the recently launched Heritage Ireland 2030 national heritage plan, we wish to put built, cultural and natural heritage at the front of both Government policy and the recovery of the country as we emerge from the pandemic and so I look forward to working with the Heritage Council on similar initiatives over the coming months and years."

Minister for Housing, Local Government, Darragh O'Brien TD added: "As many people know, I am committed to the heritage-led regeneration of our towns and villages, so I am truly delighted to congratulate the 13 successful towns that will benefit from the Historic Towns Initiative 2022.

"In keeping with the new Government policy Town Centre First, these heritage-led regeneration projects will bring economic benefits to our historic towns, thereby helping them to prosper once again. The re-use of vacant buildings in our town centres will address the supply of homes, tackle dereliction and help us meet our climate change targets."

Chief Executive of the Heritage Council, Virginia Teehan commented: "The Heritage Council is very pleased to, once again, administer the Historic Towns Initiative in 2022. Working with local authority partners and communities on heritage-led regeneration is a priority for the Heritage Council, and we very much look forward to working with Ministers O'Brien and Noonan on this, and all aspects, of the care of our rich heritage."

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Note to Editors:

About the Heritage Council: The Heritage Council was established under the Heritage Act 1995 with responsibility to propose policies and priorities for the national heritage. It works in co-operation with a range of agencies, communities and individuals to promote education, enjoyment and understanding of our national heritage. For further information, visit: www.heritagecouncil.ie.

Project details and awards 2022:

Listowel, Co Kerry: This funding will support conservation of seven historic structures in William Street, Church Street and the Square and will build upon the programme of conservation and repairs carried out under this scheme in 2021. €151,596.

Ballyshannon, Co Donegal: This project will work with the owners of seven buildings on the Mall and Main Street to conserve the historic built environment. This will facilitate sustainable heritage-led regeneration, reinforce civic pride, and promote the tourism potential of Ballyshannon's historic core. €250,000.

Ballina, Co Mayo: The aim of these works is to carry out conservation works to the Belleek Gate Lodge Protected Structure. This project will allow for re-use of the structure as a residence for artists, writers, ecologists, historians, environmentalists and community engagement. €160,000.

Macroom, Co Cork: This award will safeguard St Colman's, a former Church of Ireland place of worship, in Macroom, Co Cork. The emergency works will save the building from further deterioration and allow its development for community use in the future. €215,847.

Tipperary town, Co Tipperary: This project intends to achieve reuse of the Glove Factory building in Tipperary town for four apartments and a commercial space. This building has been vacant and unused for almost 50 years and is of regional significance. €163,000.

Naas, Co Kildare: This grant will enable the re-use of the historic Potato Market in Naas as a community space. € 168,931.

Monaghan, Co Monaghan: This project aims to re-establish residential use in the historic Dublin Street, Monaghan town. This will entail external conservation works to eight buildings and internal refurbishment to two buildings for residential use. This project will be scheduled over 2022 - 2023. €247,952.

Enniscorthy, Co Wexford: The aim of the project is the renovation of the ground floor of a significant heritage building in Templeshannon, Enniscorthy, into a food and community hub. This project will be scheduled over 2022 - 2023. €250,000.

In addition, funding has been awarded to the relevant local authorities for five heritage-led regeneration plans. It is hoped that such plans will inform future applications for conservation funding in:

- Callan, Co Kilkenny (€10,000).
- Drogheda, Co Louth (€20,000).
- Wexford, Co Wexford (€40,000).
- Ballymote, Co Sligo (€40,000).
- Carlow, Co Carlow (€40,000).