

PRESS RELEASE

Tuesday, 7th July 2020

€1m in funding announced for six Historic Towns

The Heritage Council, along with the new Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform, Malcolm Noonan TD, today (07.07.20) announced that six historic towns will share €1m funding under the Historic Towns Initiative 2020.

The €1m in capital funding will help to provide jobs and economic stimulus through heritage-led regeneration and will aid the rebuilding of local economies with heritage as a focal point.

The Historic Towns Initiative is a joint initiative between the Department and the Heritage Council and this year's scheme follows on from highly successful programmes in both 2018 and 2019.

The towns receiving funding in 2020 are:

- Tralee, Co Kerry.
- Ramelton, Co Donegal.
- Ballina, Co Mayo.
- Roscommon, Co Roscommon.
- Sligo, Co Sligo.
- Clones, Co Monaghan.

The six towns were selected following a competitive process inviting local authorities to propose projects for heritage-led regeneration in one historic town in their area, with the selection process completed in February 2020, but delayed in line with public health restrictions.

Speaking today, Minister Noonan said: "Firstly, as many people know, I am committed to Heritage-led regeneration of our towns and villages, so I am truly delighted that one of my first roles as Minister is to congratulate the six successful towns that will benefit from the Historic Towns Initiative 2020.

"We are in unprecedented times and our communities have been confronted with challenges and hardships that are both unique and extraordinary. My hope is that funding such as this can, through heritage-led regeneration, bring economic benefits to our historic towns helping them to prosper once again.

"We wish to put built, cultural and natural heritage at the front of both Government policy and the recovery of the country and so I look forward to working with the Heritage Council and the Department on similar initiatives over the coming months and years."

Chief Executive of the Heritage Council, Virginia Teehan commented: "The Heritage Council is very pleased to, once again, administer the Historic Towns Initiative in 2020. Working with partners to preserve our built heritage is an important Heritage Council priority and we very much look forward to working with Minister Noonan in this, and all aspects, of the care of our rich heritage."

Chair of the Heritage Council, Michael Parsons added: "It is wonderful to be in a position to support such a range of projects across the country. The Heritage Council is delighted that Minister Noonan has taken up this brief and given his strong support for this joint initiative."

For further information on the Historic Towns Initiative, visit www.heritagecouncil.ie.

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Contact: Joanne Ahern, DHR Communications, Tel: 087-9881837.

Notes to Editors:

Project details and awards 2020

- **Tralee, Co Kerry:** This funding will support the plan-led regeneration of Tralee's historic buildings, underpin urban revitalisation, promote conservation-led improvements to historic fabric to ensure occupancy in the Denny Street and Day Place area of the town. Specifically, railings and joinery will undergo conservation works. €200,000.
- **Roscommon, Co Roscommon:** The works proposed in this project will act as a catalyst for heritage-led regeneration in the older parts of the town which have suffered decline. Conservation works will be carried out to the street frontage of a number of historic buildings. €157,000.
- **Clones, Co Monaghan:** This project will restore the setting and enhance the visitor experience to the round tower, sarcophagus & 'Wee Abbey' by removing intrusive infrastructure, improving access and conserving key attributes. €103,000.
- **Sligo, Co Sligo:** This project will involve private owners working with Sligo County Council to undertake the heritage-led regeneration of O'Connell Street (Architectural Conservation Area) in Sligo town through streetscape conservation and enhancements. €200,000.
- **Ramelton, Co Donegal:** This project will work with local property owners to conserve the historic built environment, facilitate sustainable heritage-led regeneration, reinforce civic pride, enhance attractiveness and promote the tourism potential of Ramelton's historic core. €200,000.
- **Ballina, Co Mayo:** This project will continue works started in 2019 with HTI funding to enable essential structural repairs and conservation works to eight properties in the Pearse Street Architectural Conservation Area in order to address dereliction, allow for occupancy and promote sustainable adaptive re-use. €140,000.