



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine



An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council

2026 TRADITIONAL FARM BUILDINGS GRANT SCHEME

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

9th APRIL 2026

This Scheme is funded under State Aid in accordance with Commission Regulation (EU) 2472/2022 of 14 December 2022 (on the basis set out in Article 36) declaring certain categories of aid in the agricultural and forestry sectors and in rural areas compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

WHO CAN APPLY FOR THIS SCHEME?

The Scheme is ONLY open to farmers participating in and accepted into the following Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine schemes:

- (i) Approved participants in ACRES.
- (ii) Approved participants of the Organic Farming Scheme

and

Are the owner of the building/other related structure for which funding is sought or are acting with the permission of the owner (in which case the owner must provide written consent).

WHAT YOU CAN APPLY FOR

NB: BUILDINGS AND OTHER RELATED STRUCTURES MUST BE LOCATED ON A PARTICIPATING HOLDING (THAT IS, THE RELEVANT DEPARTMENT SCHEME THAT YOU PARTICIPATE IN)

Eligible Buildings

- Traditional farm buildings constructed before 1960 for a use associated with agriculture, **and** built using traditional methods and materials such as timber, brick, stone, earth, slate or thatch and which were, or still are, used for an agricultural purpose;
- Other traditional buildings **ONLY** where it is clearly demonstrated they are in long established active agricultural use;
- Reinstatement of previously existing features which were removed (such as a building which has lost its roof) will **ONLY** be considered where the Heritage Council deems exceptional circumstances apply **and** if there is strong evidence, e.g. old photographs, of their former appearance **and** is necessary **and** they complete an otherwise intact environment.

- The buildings and other related structures should be in fair condition. If in poor condition they must be repairable and have surviving materials that contribute to their character.

Eligible Other Related Structures

- Other related structures constructed before 1960 for a use associated with agriculture, and built using traditional methods and materials of the time such as stone, timber, brick, earth, and which were, or still are, used for an agricultural purpose, including:
 - Cobbled yard surfaces
 - Walled orchards
 - Piers and/or wrought iron gates to fields and farmyard
 - *Farmyard arched entranceways*
 - *Farmyard and field boundary masonry walls*
 - Masonry built dungsteads
 - Millraces
 - Farm bridges
- Reinstatement of previously existing features which were removed will ONLY be considered where the Heritage Council deems exceptional circumstances apply and if there is strong evidence, e.g., old photographs, of their former appearance and is necessary and they complete an otherwise intact environment.
- The other related structures should be in fair condition. If in poor condition they must be repairable and have surviving materials that contribute to their character.

Ineligible Buildings and Other Related Structures

- Farmhouses, residential or domestic buildings, currently in occupation or intended for occupation;
- Buildings already converted to a non-agricultural use, for example, to a

residential or non-agricultural business use;

- Traditional farm buildings which are intended to be converted to a non-agricultural use during the life of the current scheme agreement with DAFM or within 5 years of payment of grant;
- Traditional farm buildings/other related structures that will not be in your ownership and/or control for the life of the current scheme agreement with DAFM;
- Buildings in ruinous condition
- Corrugated iron hay barns;
- Post 1960 farm buildings such as slatted sheds or milking parlours.
- Entrance Gates and piers to House
- Limekilns
- As traditional dry stone wall maintenance is a general action available under ACRES, dry stone wall applications **from ACRES participants** will **not** be eligible for consideration for a grant on this scheme.

Eligible Works

Conservation works are those that maintain the character and integrity of the built heritage using compatible repair or construction techniques. The works should not be designed to modernise the appearance of the buildings or other related structures as, in many cases, the wear and tear of the years contributes to their character. **Instead the works should be the minimum necessary, carrying out a repair to fix what is wrong but not setting out to do too much work.** Works should be carried out using traditional building techniques and materials. For further advice on conservation works carried out on this scheme as well as presentations please consult the resources section available here:

<https://www.heritagecouncil.ie/projects/traditional-farm-buildings-grant-scheme#tab-resources> and a selection of previous grant aided projects on this grant scheme are available to view here:

<https://www.heritagecouncil.ie/projects/traditional-farm-buildings-grant-scheme#tab-featured-projects>

The following is a list of the types of work envisaged:

- Repair of a wrought iron field gate using the traditional skills of a blacksmith;

- Re-pointing of stone walls of building, farmyard, walled orchard or field boundary wall in earth or lime mortar;
- Repair of a slate, thatch or small-scale corrugated iron roof including its structure;
- Repair of stone and earthen walls, or parts of walls;
- Re-plastering of stonewalls in lime plaster
- Structural repairs to prevent walls leaning over/ensure structural stability;
- Repair or re-instatement of timber doors or windows where necessary;
- Repair or renewal of lintels;
- Repair of loft where it is required to ensure structural stability;
- Repair of rainwater goods where they are pre-existing; and installation where deemed necessary.
- Drainage works where they are necessary to ensure structural stability;
- Repair and relaying where necessary of cobbled yard surface
- Work undertaken by you or by workers on your farm in the conservation repair of buildings built of traditional methods and materials of the time using compatible repair or construction techniques.

Ineligible Works

- Internal works, other than those that are required to ensure structural stability;
- Alterations and improvements unless the Heritage Council deems them necessary;
- Routine maintenance and minor repairs;
- Replacement of functioning elements of any date
- Works already carried out or underway;
- Works that cost below the threshold of the minimum grant.

- Any works resulting from an event which would normally be insurable
- Reinstatement/restoration works unless The Heritage Council deems exceptional circumstances apply.
- Any capitalised works' (on the basis set out in Article 36) undertaken by you personally or by workers on your farm, that create an asset;
- Any works that are not eligible under the terms and conditions of this grant scheme

THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

If your application passes the Screening Stage it will be initially reviewed by the Heritage Council and recommendations presented to a panel comprising of internal and external expertise for grant assessment. An officer from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine will serve as observer. All applications will be assessed under the following weighted selection criteria:

	Score
1. Cultural Heritage interest of the building/other related structure	20
2. Project that will best demonstrate public benefit, including landscape value	20
3. Habitat value or potential	20
4. Climate Change Mitigation/Environmental Sustainability	20
5. Best Value including value for money	20

60 is the minimum qualifying mark. As this is a competitive application process the highest priority projects will be chosen in line with the available funding budget. Standardized scoring may be applied if deemed necessary. Weightings *may* be applied to the criteria in order to promote those

INFORMATION ON GRANT CONDITIONS

Funding

This scheme falls under State Aid in accordance with Commission Regulation (EU) 2472/2022 of 14 December 2022 (on the basis set out in Article 36) declaring certain categories of aid in the agricultural and forestry sectors and in rural areas compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

The minimum grant amount offered will be €4,000 and the maximum, €30,000. The grant will not be for more than 75% of the cost of the approved works. (Some grants will be for less than 75% of the cost of the approved works). The balance of funding may not be from any other State source. LEADER funding cannot be obtained for the conservation works in addition to a grant under this scheme. The smallest project that could be funded would cost in the region of €5,400. Grant aid will only be payable on the VAT exclusive costs, regardless of whether you are VAT registered or not. For grants of €10,000 and over the registration number and certificate number of current Tax Clearance Certificate in your name will be required prior to payment of grant.

Conservation Supervision and Specification

If you are successful, you will be required to employ a conservation consultant to supervise the works. You are not required to employ this person at the initial application stage. Up to 75% of the cost of supervision can be considered in any grant offer to be made.

The conservation consultant will, on your behalf (if successful), be required to submit a conservation specification on the works proposed, to inspect and supervise the project as it progresses, to provide an interim report during progress of the project and on completion a final report. Upon completion the conservation consultant will also sign off on the costs claimed and the standard of works carried out.

Works cannot commence until the conservation specification is submitted and agreed with the Heritage Council. It should be agreed at least four months prior to end-date for completion of works unless agreed otherwise. The conservation specification must adhere to best conservation practice and should demonstrate the maximum works needed to secure the survival of the building or other related structure whilst, at the same time, being the minimum necessary to solve its problems. Replacement of original or historic material should be kept to a minimum and should only be carried out where necessary and only if agreed. The conservation specification will include such

information as:

- A concise description of the building/other related structure, noting its significance, appearance, setting, condition, present use, floor area (if building applied for), brief architectural history (if available), and the materials it is made of;
- A concise description of the works proposed identifying the issues that are causing risk or decay, what remedial repairs are proposed, how they will be done, what materials will be used and how the fabric will be conserved;
- Photographs and/or other illustrations;
- Details of on-site supervision and monitoring;
- Floor area (if building)

Wildlife

Many farm buildings, other related structures and farmyards provide roosting sites for bats, and nesting sites for birds that are protected by law. Some also host rare plant species. **If** offered a grant, a wildlife survey may be required to identify which species are present and how to carry out the works without affecting them - for example altering the timing of the repair work or the material used. Where a wildlife survey is required, a report of the survey will need to be submitted to the Heritage Council before works commence. Up to 75% of the cost of the wildlife survey may be allowed in the grant allocation.

NB: If bats or nesting birds are present, a derogation licence from the National Parks and Wildlife Service may have to be obtained before works can commence.

Statutory Permissions

Repair works are usually considered exempt from the planning process but for grant aid to be considered, you may need written confirmation from the Local Authority, or other agency, that the works are exempt. If the works relate to a protected structure, you should consult the Local Authority prior to making a grant application. If a building was built prior to 1700, it is likely to be protected under the National Monuments Acts 1930-2014. If so, the Local Authority and the National Monuments Service of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage need to give consent to the proposed works before grant aid can be considered. As noted above if bats or nesting

birds are present, a licence from the National Parks and Wildlife Service may need to be obtained before works can commence. All grant aided works must meet all statutory requirements as noted above and including the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 (as amended), Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013-2019 and employment law. The onus of obtaining all consents, permissions, etc. rests with you, the grantee.

Use

The building must be maintained in agricultural use while you continue to have a contract with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and, **in all cases**, for a period of not less than five years after payment of grant. If the building being grant-aided is used for another purpose or sold within a period of 5 years from payment of grant, the Heritage Council and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine reserves the right to claw-back some or all the grant monies.

Reporting

As noted above, an interim report prepared by your conservation consultant, **must be submitted online during progress of the project**. This should be a concise report with photographs detailing date of inspection, works carried out to date and noting any unforeseen issues that arise. Upon completion, a final report will be required, containing date of inspection, a short summary on works carried out, photographs, details on floor area and employment benefit, and reference to the implementation of the wildlife survey (if carried out).

Inspections

The Heritage Council may carry out a pre and final inspection of every project. Works cannot commence until the conservation specification is agreed. The Heritage Council may also carry out an inspection while works are underway. No inspection will take place by the Heritage Council without your express prior consent. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine reserves the right to carry out inspections at any time on approved works with or without prior notice at any reasonable time(s) and without prejudice to public liability.

Publicity and Public Awareness

The Heritage Council will have a photographic record made of the buildings

or other related structures and/or the works being grant-aided and may wish to use such photographs in promoting the support and work of The Heritage Council and the Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine.

The grant-aid given must be suitably acknowledged by you in the form of a plaque, written acknowledgment or other agreed form. The Heritage Council may wish to represent the grant aided works by a dot on the Heritage Maps portal: <https://www.heritagecouncil.ie/projects/heritage-maps>

You may also be requested to allow a sign to be erected on site during construction acknowledging the support of The Heritage Council and The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

The Heritage Council is keen to promote active engagement with and raise public appreciation of heritage. You will be requested to organise an event, communicating and engaging with the public on your project or other agreed publicity.

You must ensure that any new archaeological discoveries will be reported to the National Monuments Service and/or the National Museum of Ireland. Any biodiversity data collected may be submitted to the National Biodiversity Data Centre and any wildlife survey may be forwarded to National Parks and Wildlife Service by the Heritage Council.

Completion of Works and Payments

Following submission of the interim report (or sooner) information will be referred to you outlining that the following documents must be submitted online in support of a claim for payment:

1. Final report by the conservation consultant on the project;
2. Three separate images of the works to the building/other related structure before and after
3. Costs certified by the conservation consultant including receipts (see below);excluding VAT.
4. Own labour timesheets signed by the conservation consultant (as

appropriate);

5. Confirmation that statutory consents have been received (as appropriate);
6. The registration number and certificate number of current Tax Clearance Certificate in your name for grants over €10,000.

All works must be completed and claim for payment with questions answered and documentation received through the Heritage Council's **online grants system** by the date specified in the letter of offer unless agreed otherwise.

The Heritage Council will make all payments in relation to this scheme on behalf of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. All agreed works must be completed, conditions complied with, and verified by the Heritage Council before payment of grant funding can be made to you.

In accordance with EU regulations, all EU scheme payments to farmers can only be made to a bank, building society or credit union accounts held with the State.

You must have a current bank/credit union account in your name to accept electronic payment of the grant. You are considered the payee, and funding will only be transferred into this bank/credit union account.

Grants will be paid in a timely manner in accordance with the Farmer's Charter.

Requirement for receipts /Proof of Payment

Clear proof of payment in the form of receipts for all costs associated with the approved works must be submitted. The receipts submitted must be in your name and should at least include the name, address and VAT number (if registered) of the supplier/contractor and be dated. Invoices marked paid are not sufficient – they will also need to be signed and dated by a company employee. Where details are not printed on a receipt using headed paper, a hand-written receipt for items purchased is acceptable provided it is signed, dated and marked by a company employee. Cash sales not showing your name are ineligible. The contents and layout of each receipt must show itemised purchases, the actual cost of each item **excluding** VAT and total amount paid and any discount given. Where the invoice/receipt is not denominated in Euro, evidence of the exchange rate used for the purposes of payment must also be provided. Additional proofs of payment may also be required, including, copies of bank records and account transactions

Your Own labour and/or use of own machinery

If you intend to carry out some or all the works yourself, you must maintain timesheets of the hours and days worked and the works carried out. Own labour timesheets will be available to download from www.heritagecouncil.ie **Only approved conservation works will be eligible and must be agreed in advance with the Heritage Council.** If you do not have experience in the use of certain traditional materials (e.g. lime mortar) you must undertake training in it, the cost of which is grant eligible. The rates for own labour and use of own machinery to be costed within current Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine reference costs, available here:

<https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/247489/ad3880c7-c6eb-45eb-89ef-624f0b0f498e.pdf#page=null>

Payment shall only be made where the timesheets have been signed off by the conservation consultant **and where the work and hours claimed and rates charged are deemed appropriate by the Heritage Council.**

Penalties

Failure to comply with the Scheme's terms and conditions and eligibility criteria will result in an appropriate penalty/sanction.

If it is not possible to remedy a transgression which is considered to impact adversely on the project a sliding scale of penalties will apply of 5%, 10%, 50% and in the worst case scenario 100%.

Members of the grant assessment panel will be reconvened to review the project and decide on the penalty, and their recommendation brought to the Head of Conservation for consideration. The applicant will be advised in writing of decision and a copy will be retained on the online grant system.

An in-person site inspection may be carried out by the Heritage Council in the event of a penalty being considered.

Serious breaches of the scheme terms and conditions may lead to the grant being refused or withdrawn in full but it is important to note that a wholesale withdrawal of grant is expected to be an extraordinarily rare occurrence.

You will have the right to appeal any penalty decision as outlined in the appeal process below.

Data Protection

Applications are subject to Freedom of Information Acts. The Heritage Council and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine operate in accordance with both the Freedom of Information Acts and the Data Protection Acts.

The Heritage Council and the Department are committed to protecting and respecting your privacy and employ appropriate technical and organisational measures to protect your information from unauthorised access. The Heritage Council or the Department will not process your personal data for any purpose other than that for which they were collected. Personal data may be exchanged with other Government Departments, local authorities, agencies under the aegis of the Department, or other public bodies, in certain circumstances where this is provided for by law.

The information submitted on applications will be stored on the online grants system and on a database held by the Heritage Council and will be treated as a public record. You agree that the Heritage Council may request or access data held externally which is required for the purpose of assessment or verification of your application under this Scheme. The Heritage Council will only retain your personal data for as long as it is necessary for the purposes for which they were collected and subsequently processed. When the business need to retain this information has expired, it will be examined with a view to destroying the personal data as soon as possible, and in line with the Heritage Council and Department policy.

Details will be uploaded to the Transparency Award Module, known as the TAM system. This is a mandatory reporting obligation for each individual aid award exceeding:

- (i) EUR 10 000 for beneficiaries active in the primary agricultural production sector;
- (ii) EUR 100 000 for beneficiaries active in the sector of the processing of agricultural products, the marketing of agricultural products, the forestry sector or for activities falling outside the scope of Article 42 of the Treaty.

- a) Reference of the identification number of the aid (*Number issued by Transparency Award Module*)
- b) Beneficiary's identifier (*Company/individual name & unique identifier*)

- c) Type of enterprise (SME/large) at the date of granting the aid;
- d) Region in which the beneficiary is located, at NUTS level II (*Region project is located in*)
- e) Sector of activity at NACE group level
- f) Aid instrument, expressed as full amount in national currency (*Amount of Grant paid to you*)
- g) Aid instrument (grant/interest rate subsidy, loan/repayable advances/reimbursable grant, guarantee, tax advantage or tax exemption, risk finance, other (please specify));
- h) Date of granting the aid
- i) Objective of the aid
- j) Granting authority

As such data in relation to your projects may be uploaded to EU systems.

Appeals

The decision of the Heritage Council and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine regarding funding awarded under this scheme is deemed to be final. However, You can seek a review of this decision to:- Traditional Farm Buildings, Organic & Locally Led division, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Johnstown Castle Estate, Co. Wexford, Y35 PN52.

Please be advised you have a right to appeal this review decision to the Agriculture Appeals Office, which operates independently of the Department. If you wish to do so, please submit your appeal in writing using the prescribed Notice of Appeal Form, within 3 months of the date of this decision letter, the appeal may be submitted using the online appeal portal available on the Agriculture Appeals Office website at the following link:

<http://www.agriappeals.gov.ie/agricultureappealsprocess/howtomakeanappeal/onlinenoticeofappealfaq/> **OR** the Notice of Appeal Form can be downloaded at www.agriappeals.gov.ie/publications/appealproceduresandforms/ **OR** obtained directly from the Agriculture Appeals Office Ph 057 866 7167.

In the Notice of Appeal form you should set out all of the grounds on which you

intend to rely in your appeal (use additional pages where necessary) and you should **upload/enclose a copy of this decision letter** along with any supporting documentation you consider relevant to your appeal. The online appeal facility contains a frequently asked questions section that will assist you making an online appeal directly to the Agriculture Appeals Office. Alternatively, your written appeal should be submitted to; The Director, Agriculture Appeals Office, Kilminchy Court, Portlaoise, Co. Laois R32 DTW5. E-mail; appeals@agriappeals.gov.ie. Further information is available on the web site www.agriappeals.gov.ie.

2026 Timeline

The grant scheme will open for applications on **Thursday 9th April 2026**. To consider your application, we must receive your online application along with required supporting documents by **Monday 18th May 2026 at 5pm**. If successful you will have until **the first week of December 2026** to complete your project unless wildlife considerations or special circumstances apply (e.g. bats) when a short extension *may* be granted.

Detailed conditions attaching to approvals will be published on The Heritage Council website www.heritagecouncil.ie

The Heritage Council, Áras na hOidhreachta, Church Lane, Kilkenny R95 X264

Tel: 056 7770777

Email: mail@heritagecouncil.ie