

FINAL

PRESS RELEASE

Friday, 1st October 2021

Monuments wanted: The Heritage Council's Adopt a Monument scheme seeks new applications

The Heritage Council is calling for new applications for its Adopt a Monument scheme, which offers communities a way of promoting pride in our past and opportunities to develop and understand the story of their locality.

Bringing the historical legacy of monuments into the heart of communities, it is a chance to work collaboratively, to get active, and participate in community development, while boosting tourism, business, and employment opportunities.

Communities from across Ireland are encouraged to apply, including new communities and minority groups, as well as established voluntary groups that have been caring for a monument for years. The Adopt a Monument scheme will provide expertise, mentoring, support, and networking to help to preserve and protect the monument for future generations.

Since the scheme started in 2016, more than 20 groups have taken part and adopted a diverse range of monuments, including a walled garden, castles, churches and graveyards, Anglo Norman earthen fortifications, a 20th century handball alley, and 19th century mining buildings.

Head of Conservation at the Heritage Council, Ian Doyle said: "The Adopt a Monument Scheme is a new way of bringing monuments into the heart of a community and for participants it offers opportunities to work collaboratively, to undertake research, and to get to know more about the history of their area. For the monuments, the scheme has the potential to ensure ongoing maintenance and care, greater protection through increased civic value, and much higher standards of interpretation and understanding."

Application forms and full details about the Adopt a Monument scheme are available here:

<https://www.heritagecouncil.ie/projects/adopt-a-monument>

The closing date for completed applications is Tuesday, 2nd November 2021 at 5pm. Entries should be emailed to adoptamonument@heritagecouncil.ie.

ENDS

Media contact: Mark O'Regan, Heritage Council, Tel: 085-8590378 / Joanne Ahern, DHR Communications, Tel: 087-9881837.

Note to Editors:

Examples of work carried out under the Adopt a Monument scheme can be found below. Images to accompany the projects can be found [here](#).

Munster: Knockboy Medieval Church and Graveyard, Co Waterford.

Knockboy Church (also known as Seskin Church), located in rural County Waterford is a fine example of a Medieval parish church. The church is highly significant as it contains a number of important ogham stones. The church requires ongoing conservation work to help to stabilise and protect the structure. The site was adopted by the Knockboy Church Conservation Group, a local voluntary organisation that was set up in the early 1990s. The group is supported by Dr Nora White. Funding and support from Waterford County Council, the Heritage Council and National Monuments Service has helped to conserve the medieval church for future generations.

Leinster: St Finian's Church & Graveyard, Lucan, Co Dublin (Esker Church)

St Finian's medieval church and graveyard in Lucan, Co Dublin is known colloquially as 'Esker Church', reflecting its location on the Esker Riada, a glacial feature which formed a highway across ancient Ireland known as the 'Slí Mhór'. Located in the middle of modern housing, it is one of the most historic structures in the area, but has recently suffered as a result of anti-social behaviour. [The Society for Old Lucan](#) adopted this monument in 2019 to learn more about it, raise local awareness, and to ensure its protection. Thanks to funding from the [Heritage Council](#) and [Creative Ireland](#), an architectural assessment and a geophysical survey were undertaken in 2019, which identified possible structural remains of an earlier church in the grounds. In 2020 and 2021, funding through South Dublin County Council and the National Monuments Service Community Monuments Fund led to the conservation of the church.

Ulster: Church of the Rath, Killeshandra, Co Cavan

Killeshandra Tidy Towns Committee applied to adopt the historic church known as Church of the Rath, Killeshandra in 2016. It is from this church that the town takes its name. The Church of the Rath is a wonderfully atmospheric graveyard that has ancient origins. The church is one of the few Jacobean style churches remaining in Ireland and has national architectural importance. Since joining the scheme, the group has received funding from the Heritage Council, Creative Ireland, Cavan County Council and National Monuments Service Community Monuments Fund to carry out a graveyard survey, brick making workshops as well as vital conservation works on the roof of the church and vaults in the graveyard to ensure the site is protected for future generations.

Connacht: Moygara Castle, Co Sligo

Located in the rolling countryside of southern County Sligo, Moygara Castle is one of the finest Gaelic castles in the north-west of Ireland. It dates from the late 16th century and early 17th century and is associated with the O'Gara clan. The ruin is distinguished

FINAL

by its large square bawn with residential towers at each of the four corners and gatehouse in the western wall. [Moygara Castle Research and Conservation Group](#) has been working for more than a decade to highlight this significant castle. The group joined the Adopt a Monument Scheme in 2019 and has received funding from the Heritage Council and the National Monuments Service Community Monuments Fund to undertake much needed conservation works on the site.

Further details of the scheme are available here: https://www.heritagecouncil.ie/content/files/Guidance_for_community_archaeology_projects.pdf / <http://www.heritagecouncil.ie/projects/adopt-a-monument>

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.