



## **Performance Delivery Agreement, 2026**

### **Heritage Council and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage**

#### **1. Introduction Purpose of Performance Delivery Agreement (PDA)**

This Performance Delivery Agreement is a performance contract in which an agreed level of service is formalised between the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Heritage Council.

The PDA will set out the Heritage Council targets for 2026 and define the output indicators on which performance should be measured.

The Agreement will support the high-level goals of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and as such it is signed by both parties with a view to maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of resources provided by the Minister to assist the Council in the exercise of its functions.

The Heritage Council was established in 1995 as a statutory body under the Heritage Act, 1995 with a Council (the Board of the body) appointed by the Minister.

The Heritage Act 2018 refocuses the activities and functions of the Heritage Council, in particular, the size and composition of its board, the requirements for a quorum at board meetings, non-remuneration of the board and the elimination of the need for statutory standing committees.

The Heritage Council is independent in the performance of its functions. Its strategic plan and the work programmes devised from that plan support the Department's high-level goals.

#### **2. Objectives of the Heritage Council**

The Heritage Council aims to ensure that our heritage is nurtured, managed and conserved to enrich the lives of people for now and the future. Its vision is for an enhanced identification of individuals and communities with their locality.

The objectives of the Heritage Council should be compatible with the overall Departmental and government strategic objectives to the extent relevant and consistent with the Heritage Council's statutory mandate and with Government Policies for the reform and modernisation of the public service.

The Department will work with the Heritage Council to ensure a co-ordinated approach to fulfilling the Department's mandate. To achieve this vision the Heritage Council will:

- Undertake research led policy proposals in pursuit of statutory mandate;
- Work towards the highest standards of heritage care;
- Remain committed to values of collaboration, accessibility and honesty;
- Deliver quality programmes and grant funding that are cost effective, positive in their social and economic impact, and are regularly reviewed to ensure they remain relevant to changing national circumstances;
- Commit to collaborative ventures with national and local government, voluntary, educational and other organisations;
- Support heritage initiatives that ensure a lasting legacy;
- Encourage heritage ventures that celebrate the diaspora and those new to the local area;
- Propose policies and priorities and make recommendations, as appropriate, to the Minister in relation to heritage as set out in the Heritage Acts 1995 to 2018.

### **3. Corporate Governance**

The Heritage Act (1995) and the Heritage Act 2018 are prescriptive in terms of:

- functions of Council
- reporting and accounting procedures to the Minister
- Council's activities as determined through its standing orders, its internal procedures and processes and its strategic plans

This Performance Delivery Agreement has been put in place in line with the revised and updated Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies as agreed by Government in 2016. It does not negate any of the above legislative requirements.

The Heritage Council agrees to the following:

- Comply with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. This Code requires for example that the Council provide a Statement of Internal Control (SIC). The Code brings together in one place all of the elements of the value-for-money framework that has been in force up to now, updated and reformed in some respects. The Code is maintained under the management of the Central Expenditure Evaluation Unit (CEEU) of the Department of Public Expenditure, Infrastructure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation;
- Manage its activities in accordance with the Heritage Council Strategic Plan, Our Place in Time 2023 – 2028;
- Comply with all aspects of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage's Reform Programme and provide timely returns to the Department as necessary;
- Provide the Heritage Council Annual Report and Accounts in accordance with the requirements of Sections 21 and 22 of the Heritage Act 1995 and publish reports on the Heritage Council website as soon as possible thereafter;

- Ensure compliance with statutory provisions laid out in the FOI act;
- Provide statistical briefing and other material in a timely manner as required by the Department including information for Parliamentary Questions, Ministerial Representations and other information requests;
- Ensure that all relevant details relating to the board of the Heritage Council are available on-line;
- Implement statutory requirements in respect of data protection;
- Ensure compliance with public administrative and financial procedures and related practices including financial expenditure and procurement requirements and including compliance with the terms of Circular 13/2014 from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform regarding the Management of and Accountability for Grants from Exchequer Funds, to include the submission of a Certificate of Assurance. Compliance with the terms of Circular 13/2014 should also be noted in the Heritage Council Financial Statement;
- Ensure compliance with Circulars 02/2016 and 14/2021 which related to Digital and ICT Expenditure in the Civil and Public Service, liaise with the Department's finance section as necessary;
- Notify the Department immediately in the event of a failure of internal controls;
- Notify the Department immediately in the event of detection of fraud and/or irregularities.

The Department wishes to highlight the importance of ensuring compliance with the Public Spending Code in all expenditure decisions on both capital and current funding, and at all stages of the programme lifecycle i.e. appraisal, planning & design, implementation and post-implementation review. Sponsoring Agencies, that is, agencies with direct responsibility for spending public funding, have overall responsibility for the proper appraisal, planning, management and post-implementation review on all current and capital expenditure and must ensure that the necessary approvals from the Department are in place prior to engaging in any expenditure and that any expenditure is in line with the provisions of the Departmental approval.

In addition, all Agencies must confirm, in writing, that they have in place an annual quality assurance process which complies with the Code and that funding may be withheld if such confirmation is not provided. This letter must be signed by the CEO/Director and must provide details of the quality assurance process that is in place.

*Legislative context and statutory obligations:*

The Heritage Council was established in 1995 as a statutory body under the Heritage Act, 1995 with a Council (the Board of the body) appointed by the Minister. The Heritage Act 2018 refocuses the activities and functions of the Heritage Council, in particular, the size and composition of its board, the requirements for a quorum at board meetings, non-remuneration of the board and the elimination of the need for statutory standing committees. The Heritage Council has functions under the National Monuments Act 1930-2013 on archaeological matters and must be consulted on the revocation of Preservation

Orders. The Heritage Council is a prescribed body under the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2022.

#### **4. Objectives of the Agreement**

The key objectives of this agreement are to outline the arrangements between the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and The Heritage Council for 2026. It builds on existing arrangements whereby the Heritage Council secures, on a five-year cycle, agreement for the Council's Strategic Plan, submits an annual report on the basis of its implementation of that plan and submits an annual work programme with a view to securing sufficient resources to implement that plan.

The Agreement will support the high level goal of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage as outlined in the Department's Statement of Strategy, namely: "To conserve, protect, manage and present our built, natural, archaeological heritage and our biodiversity, for its intrinsic value, including to the environment as well as a support to local communities, regional economic development and sustainable employment".

The purpose of this document is to:

- Outline and clarify work programme activities;
- Ensure that resources are used in an effective manner;
- Ensure the delivery of quality services to the public.

The requirements in relation to reporting arrangements for both corporate governance and financial issues are also included:

- To clarify the expectations of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in relation to the Heritage Council;
- To define the inputs, outputs and the anticipated outcome of Heritage Council activities;
- To measure performance of these functions through monitoring of agreed targets, outputs and outcome indicators.

#### **5 Mutual Commitments**

- Both parties commit to proactive and timely communications, cooperation and information sharing on service delivery;
- Both parties support the effective achievement of agreed targets as well as the promotion of partnership, responsiveness and mutual cooperation in their on-going interactions;
- Both parties support prompt and timely responses to correspondence, information requests and related matters;
- Both parties commit to keep each other fully apprised and updated on all key issues;
- Both parties agree to hold quarterly meetings throughout the year;

- The Chairperson of the Heritage Council shall meet with the Minister of the Department at least once a year;
- A member of the Board of the Heritage Council will attend at least one management liaison meeting between the Department and the Heritage Council.

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage will provide the following supports to enable the Heritage Council to fulfil its mandate:

- Details of the Department’s Statement of Strategy to ensure the Council’s goals and objectives are in line with those set out in the Department’s Strategy.
- Ensure, to the extent possible, adequate resources for the Heritage Council to fulfil its role and responsibilities having regard to current constraints;
- Organise the presentation of estimates for the Heritage Council by the Minister each year based on the pre-budget submission from the Heritage Council;
- Provide timely sanction for expenditure and staffing in line with public service *staffing and resource management framework / delegated sanction* arrangements;
- Provide updates on public financial procedures and civil service HR policy guidelines;
- Provide guidance on civil service HR policy, public expenditure, remuneration and industrial relations, procurement and contracts, government accounting and governance and liaise with the Heritage Council in relation to public service reform initiatives;
- Respect the independence of the Heritage Council as a body corporate in the performance of its functions.

## 6. Inputs

Financial support provided to the Heritage Council through the annual Estimates process:

Subhead	Programme	2024	2025	2026
F3	<b>Heritage Council</b>			
	Pay (Current)	1,852	2,092	2,773
	Pension (Current)	52	154	172
	Non-pay (Current)	6,120	6,993	6,555
	Capital	8,550	9,550	10,860
	<b>Total F3 (REV)</b>	<b>16,574</b>	<b>18,789</b>	<b>20,360</b>

### Human Resources Inputs

The Heritage Council will monitor staffing to ensure that

- It complies with the Department’s Delegated Sanction arrangements;
- It adheres to all relevant legislation, regulations, circulars and strategic workforce planning in managing the level and composition of staff;
- An updated workforce plan is in place identifying immediate and longer-term staffing needs within the existing financial allocations;

- Procedures are in place for managing temporary contracts to avoid entering contracts of indefinite duration.

### **Financial Allocation**

The Department will write formally to the Heritage Council setting out current and capital allocations for the year 2026. The grant allocation is dependent on the ability of the Heritage Council to show the delivery of the objectives set out in this document in addition to any other performance monitoring processes that may be introduced.

The Heritage Council will submit monthly drawdowns, included in which will be:

- Cash flow statements;
- Management Accounts;
- Details of the balance in each account held by the Heritage Council;
- Draw-down requests will be broken down into their component parts of
  - Capital
  - Non-pay Current
  - Pay
  - Pension (ongoing cost)
  - Pension Lump Sums
  - Overtime
  - Allowances
  - Employers' PRSI;
- The Heritage Council will provide a table of proposed activities, budgets, outputs for consideration as part of the Estimates Process. The table ultimately agreed between the Heritage Council and the Department will be included in the Performance Delivery Agreement the following year.

## 7. Performance/ Service Levels and Performance Measures

No.	Activity	2026 Target Output	2026 Output				Budget (Version 1)
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
<b>Grants</b>							
1	Historic Towns Initiative (HTI) - a dedicated Historic Towns programme to be delivered by the Council in 2025, in collaboration with the Department	Competitive funding of €2 million for historic regeneration projects in 10 towns. HTI Seminar in January 2026; regular steering group meetings to be held throughout 2026, to include site visits.	Webinar to be held in January for applicants; Applications to be received and assessed by Steering Group; Letters of offer issue after board approval	Steering Group meeting	Steering Group meeting; Inspections to 2 projects; Reallocation of underspend where necessary	Grant drawdowns and completion reports received. Grants paid.	€2,000,000
2	Deliver the Irish Walled Towns Network Capital Grants Programme	Conservation projects to conserve historic town fabric; IWTN AGM in Q1 2026.	IWTN grants programme to open to membership applicants; Grants	Training event delivered; Bi-monthly ezine issued	Events in member towns as part of Heritage Week; Interpretation and Events grant drawdowns and	Conservation Grant Completion and drawdown.	€440,000

No.	Activity	2026 Target Output	2026 Output				Budget (Version 1)
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
			to be awarded in March.		completion reports received. Grants paid.		
3	Deliver the Irish Walled Towns Network (IWTN) Walled Towns Day Grants programme.	IWTN Interpretation and event grants to be awarded.	IWTN grants programme to open to membership applicants	Letters of offer issue after board approval	Interpretation and Events grant drawdowns and completion reports received. Grants paid	Interpretation grants drawdowns and completion reports received. Grants paid.	€140,000
4	Support the Irish Landmark Trust to create an awareness and appreciation of Irelands Built Heritage through the restoration and care of its portfolio of properties.	Agree and implement a service level agreement with the Irish Landmark Trust and the Heritage Council. Hold regular review meetings with the CEO and chairperson of the Irish Landmark Trust.	Draft SLA issued for discussion, then finalised and agreed at HC meeting. Meeting with ILT CEO.	Drawdown as per SLA. Meeting with ILT and CEO Presentation by CEO and Chair of ILT to HC	Drawdown as per SLA. Meeting with CEO and chairperson	Drawdown as per SLA and final reporting. Meeting with CEO and chairperson	€270,000
5	Support the Discovery Programme to deliver original	Coordinate with the Chair of the Board of Directors and CEO of the DP to	Draft SLA issued for discussion. Drawdown as per draft SLA.	SLA approved by HC board. Drawdown as per SLA. Meeting with	Drawdown as per SLA. Meeting with CEO and chairperson.	Drawdown as per SLA and final reporting. Meeting with	€1,250,000

No.	Activity	2026 Target Output	2026 Output				Budget (Version 1)
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
	research in archaeology and meet governance requirements.	ensure that the company fulfils the provisions outlined in the DP/HC SLA. Work with the CEO, Chairman and Board of Directors, to support the implementation of the DP strategic plan. Review outputs of the DP to ensure that the KPIs set out in the SLA are delivered.		CEO and chairperson.	Support from the DP for two Adopt a Monument community groups	CEO and chairperson	
6	Support heritage organisations to deliver on national policies and plans.	Deliver the 2026 Heritage Organisation Support Fund.	Advertise and seek applications. Assess applications and evaluate through an external assessment panel. Issue letters of offer after board approval	Monitor awards to ensure spend	Monitor awards to ensure spend	Heritage Organisation support fund grant drawdowns and completion reports received. Grants paid.	€1,800,000

No.	Activity	2026 Target Output	2026 Output				Budget (Version 1)
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
7	Oversee the operation of the National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) CLG.	Coordinate with the Chair of the Board of Directors and CEO of the company to ensure that the company fulfils the provisions outlined in the NBDC/HC Operating Agreement. Work with the NBDC Chair and Board of Directors, to support the implementation of the NBDC strategic plan. Review outputs of the NBDC to ensure that the KPIs set out in the Operating Agreement are delivered.	Finalise NBDC budget allocation from HC. Coordinate review meeting with Chairperson and CEO. Review Operating Agreement and scientific KPIs.	Coordinate review meeting with Chairperson and CEO. Establish areas where the NBDC and HC can coordinate on the delivery of common goals and the implementation of strategic objectives of both organisations and actions set out on NBAP, launched in 2024.	Coordinate Review Meeting with Chair and CEO to: Review KPIs as outlined in Operating Agreement; Examine quarterly management accounts; Review drawdowns; Address any outstanding issues from last review meeting	Coordinate review meeting with Chairperson and CEO. Address any outstanding issues from previous meetings and areas of common work.	€1,800,000
8	Support community and voluntary heritage groups	To deliver a community heritage grant scheme with a budget of €2 million	Advertise (to include targeted radio campaign) and seek	Issue letters of offer after board approval	Monitor awards to ensure spend	Community Heritage fund grant drawdowns and	€2,050,000

No.	Activity	2026 Target Output	2026 Output				Budget (Version 1)
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
	to deliver locally focussed heritage projects.		applications, hold webinar for applicants. in January. Assess applications and evaluate through an external assessment panel. Issue letters of offer after board approval.			completion reports received. Grants paid.	
9	Provides financial support for staff in local authorities, state agencies, and educational institutions with responsibility for heritage programmes, via the Heritage Stewardship Fund.	Deliver the 2026 Heritage Stewardship Fund.	Advertise and seek applications. Assess applications and evaluate through an external assessment panel. Issue letters of offer after Council approval	Monitor awards to ensure spend. National Heritage Week events held.	Monitor awards to ensure spend.	Monitor awards to ensure spend; review final reports.	€500,000
<b>Conservation</b>							

No.	Activity	2026 Target Output	2026 Output				Budget (Version 1)
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
10	Support local communities to engage with Local Heritage sites through the Adopt a Monument programme.	Support the 15 active groups to deliver on actions identified in their management plan.	Recruit new AaM project manager	Support groups to deliver grant aided projects and to develop management plans for new entrants; In person workshop to introduce new members to each other and their sites and to Heritage Council and Adopt a Monument teams	Community archaeology conference to be held for members and other interested groups	Conclusion of 2026 grant-aided projects and final networking event	€20,000
11	Ongoing management by the Heritage Council of Heritage Maps.	Maintain rebuilt HeritageMaps.ie website, acquisition of new datasets	Procurement of ongoing technical support	5 New datasets identified	5 new datasets identified	5 new datasets identified	€10,000
12	Lead on the delivery of the All-Ireland Heritage Skills Programme. A collaboration	To work with the partners to ensure the successful completion of the 2025/26 cohort. To work with the	Meet with Advisory Board to review programme Support production of review report 1.	Recruitment of participants for 2026/27: Ongoing liaison with partners to include assessment of	Conclusion of 2025/26 All-Ireland skills programme cohort. Initiation of 2026-	Ongoing liaison with partners to include progress of 2026-27 trainees and payments as per	€60,000

No.	Activity	2026 Target Output	2026 Output				Budget (Version 1)
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
	between the King's Foundation, the Historic Environment Division, Northern Ireland, National Museums Northern Ireland, and the Heritage Council to provide bursaries to support participants to develop advanced skills in the area of building and conservation. This programme is supported by an MOU between all partners.	Programme Advisory Board to evaluate success. To support the programme coordinator in the organisation of a large-scale end of programme event marking the completion of the programme. Recruit six new participants for year 2026/27.	Advertisement of 2026-27 All-Ireland skills programme  Agree revised MOU  Support coordination of event to mark the 2024/25 participants graduation from the training programme.	2026-27 applications, interview, payments as per agreement and communications. Participate in Advisory Group meeting. Visit NI training centre to meet with participants on placement.	27 All-Ireland skills programme cohort.	agreement and communications  Attend Advisory Board meeting and review progress of work for Year 3. Support the completion of Review report.	
13	Utilise the Heritage Council's status as a	Continue to implement the recommendations of	Respond to a minimum of 15 statutory plan	Respond to a minimum of 15 statutory plan	Respond to a minimum of 15 statutory plan	Respond to a minimum of 15 statutory plan	€7,000

No.	Activity	2026 Target Output	2026 Output				Budget (Version 1)
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
	prescribed body under the Planning and Development Acts/Regulations	the 2023 report on the <i>Role of the Heritage Council in the planning process</i> by making submissions on national policy, forward planning, development management, and strategic infrastructure developments - target of minimum 60 submissions in 2026	consultations/planning application referrals.  Continue to screen applications received from planning authorities with a view to submitting observations.	consultations/planning application referrals.  Continue to screen applications received from planning authorities with a view to submitting observations.	consultations/planning application referrals.  Continue to screen applications received from planning authorities with a view to submitting observations.	consultations/planning application referrals.  Continue to screen applications received from planning authorities with a view to submitting observations.	
14	Developing a Centre of Excellence for Traditional Building Skills in Ireland.	Work with partners to support the delivery of the action in the Programme for Government (2025) on the Development of a Centre of Excellence for Traditional Building Skills in Ireland	Convene steering group on proposed skills centre; draft report making recommendations	Submission to Minister as policy recommendation after HC board approval; Clear policy direction on proposed skills centre			

No.	Activity	2026 Target Output	2026 Output				Budget (Version 1)
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
15	Administer the Traditional Farm Buildings Scheme in partnership with the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and the Marine (DAFM)	To deliver a minimum of 60-70 conservation projects on eligible farms across Ireland subject to renewal of funding and administrative arrangements with DAFM	Confirm funding arrangements with DAFM and agree MOU; subject to agreement advertise for new applications	Award projects after assessment	Monitor and conduct selected field visits to successful projects	Selected field visits to successful projects and grant finalisation and drawdown	€1,500,000 (via DAFM, subject to approval)
<b>Research, Learning and Cultural Heritage</b>							
16	Development of a Traveller Heritage Strategy in collaboration with the Traveller Community. A joint HC Traveller Community working group was established in late 2023 to support this objective.	To publish the Traveller Heritage Strategy and Implementation Plan before year end. Begin delivery of implementation plan.	Working group to meet, agree final draft of strategy.	Strategy designed and launched.	Implementation of strategy initiated.	Ongoing delivery of strategy in line with agreed implementation plan.	€70,000

No.	Activity	2026 Target Output	2026 Output				Budget (Version 1)
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
17	Support the Government on the development of guidelines on Repatriation and Restitution of Cultural Heritage Objects. Following policy advice from the Heritage Council Minister Martin established and Advisory Committee on Repatriation and Restitution in June 2023. The Committee was formally constituted and met in December 2023.	To advance the development of guidelines on restitution and repatriation in line with best professional practice and the law. Publication of Guidelines in 2026 will be subject to approval by Minister.	Committee concludes its work: delivery of final report to Minister. Publication of Practical Guide.				€35,000
18	Establish a Heritage Research Unit	To establish a Research-Subcommittee of	To convene the first meeting of the	To convene the second meeting of	To convene the third meeting of	To convene the fourth meeting of the research	€140,000

No.	Activity	2026 Target Output	2026 Output				Budget (Version 1)
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
		the Heritage Council to set an enabling research agenda	research sub-committee  Consult with the Department in relation to research priorities for the year.	the research sub-committee	the research sub-committee	sub-committee and prepare annual report  Consult with the Department in relation to research priorities for the year.	
19	Continue to support and progress the Conservation Internship Scheme, an advanced conservation programme.	To support at least 7 internships by end of year in national cultural institutions and university conservation laboratories.	5 internships	5 internships	5 internships	7 internships  Winter Show case event mid-December, for interns to present an overview of their work as part of the programme.	€87,500
20	School visits and number of students engaged through the	Projections for primary programme 3200 visits/176k pupils	Go-live for new booking system	Procurement of new panel of post-primary specialists	National post-primary roll-out in Sep 2026	Numbers for primary programme	€730,000

No.	Activity	2026 Target Output	2026 Output				Budget (Version 1)
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
	national Heritage in Schools Programme	<p>Projections for post-primary: 165 visits/5000 student visit experiences/25 schools</p> <p>Go-live for new booking system</p> <p>Procurement of new panel of post-primary specialists</p> <p>National post-primary roll-out in Sep 2026</p>				<p>3200 visits/176k pupils</p> <p>Numbers for post-primary: 165 visits/5000 student visit experiences/25 schools</p>	
21	Museums facilitated through the MSPI.	<p>Projected number of fully accredited museums: 52</p> <p>Projected number of participants: 83</p>	<p>To continue to map analogue processes to new software accreditation platform</p> <p>Recruitment of new assessor panel</p>	<p>Launch of new platform to MSPI community (participants and assessors)</p>	<p>Resumption of eligibility applications</p> <p>Awards ceremony</p>	<p>52 number of fully accredited museums</p> <p>83 number of participants</p>	<p>€82,000.00</p> <p>€27,060.00</p>

No.	Activity	2026 Target Output	2026 Output				Budget (Version 1)
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
		Go-live of new MSPI accreditation platform  Recruitment of new assessor panel  Resumption of eligibility applications  Awards ceremony					
22	Irish Community Archive Network, (iCAN) iCAN is a collaborative project which supports communities in collecting local history and sharing it online. This project is a collaboration between the National Museum of Ireland, the HC	To work with the National Museum of Ireland and iCAN Advisory Group to grow the iCAN programme and implement the remaining findings from the 2022 iCAN review. The HC will work with partners to implement the recommendations of the review. To work with partners to	55 websites  55 members  9.1m website views  60 attendees at training	60 websites  55 members  9.1m page views  90 attendees at training	60 websites  55 members  9.4m website page views.  150 attendees at training	64 websites (+9)  67 members (+12)  9.8m website page views (+1.08m)  50 attendees At training	€171,000

No.	Activity	2026 Target Output	2026 Output				Budget (Version 1)
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
	and participating local authorities.	<p>agree a work programme; To provide funding as outlined in the MOU.</p> <p>Increase of 700k website page views</p> <p>Increase of 500 attendees at training events.</p>					
<b>Climate, Biodiversity and Local Heritage</b>							
23	Ceangal delivered as the national framework for governance and support of local authority heritage professionals, including Heritage Officer, Biodiversity Officer, Archivist	Heritage Officer and Biodiversity Officer roles supported in all 31 local authorities Archivist in place in 8 additional local authorities and Architectural Conservation Officer in place in 4	Unified SLA issued to 31 LAs. Continued liaison with LAs on recruitment. CCMA WG meeting held	SLA Compliance monitoring. Assist LAs with recruitment	CCMA WG meeting held. Assist LAs with recruitment	Year-end report on staffing outcomes and SLA compliance completed, including limiting factors.	2,559,584

No.	Activity	2026 Target Output	2026 Output				Budget (Version 1)
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
	and Architectural Conservation Officer posts.	additional local authorities, subject to local authority recruitment Unified Service Level Agreement issued and monitored CCMA Working Group engagement progressed					
24	Deliver structured professional development, peer learning and all-island collaboration for local authority heritage professionals through the Ceangal programme.	Four quarterly two-day Heritage Officer and Biodiversity Officer training blocks delivered Biodiversity Officer leadership and change management programme delivered Archivist and Architectural Conservation Officer training delivered	Kilkenny training block delivered	Fingal training block delivered	Monaghan training block and All-Island Conference delivered	Wicklow training block and Archivist/ACO training delivered	160,000

No.	Activity	2026 Target Output	2026 Output				Budget (Version 1)
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
		All-Island Heritage Professionals Conference delivered					
25	Support Publication and strategic oversight of Local Authority Heritage Plans and Local Biodiversity Action Plans	Heritage Council advisory input provided on all draft City and County Heritage Plans and Local Biodiversity Action Plans published in 2026. Support provided towards approval of plans progressing through local authority adoption processes, indicative target 24 Heritage Plans and 15 Local Biodiversity Action Plans in place by year end.	Engagement with local authorities on draft Plans commenced.	Written HC inputs provided on draft Plans and LBAPs as they arise.	Continued advisory input as Plans progress.	Report on plan outcomes completed.	-
26	Support implementation of approved City	Targeted funding schemes delivered to enable	Schemes deigned, advertised and	Progress monitored through	Monitoring of grants and	Grant schemes delivered, all	CCHP Grants 1,275,000. LBAP

No.	Activity	2026 Target Output	2026 Output				Budget (Version 1)
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
	and County Heritage Plans and Local Biodiversity Action Plans through targeted, plan-linked funding schemes aligned to agreed local authority priorities.	implementation of priority actions identified in adopted City and County Heritage Plans and Local Biodiversity Action Plans.	applications assessed	liaison with relevant officers	progress, to ensure spend	projects complete.	Grants 560,000. Total 1,835,000
27	Implement Sustainability Strategy, and embed climate considerations across programmes and practice in line with Public Sector Climate Mandate.	All Public Sector Climate Mandate requirements met and published. Sustainability Strategy implementation progressed and monitored across organisational and programme activity.	SEAI energy reporting 2025 completed. Sustainability Strategy published and implementation actions commenced. Climate messaging coordinated for Ceangal networks.	Internal climate and heritage guidance note completed. Climate input provided to LA Heritage Plans and LBAPs as they arise.	Climate content embedded in HO–BO training and professional events. Climate heritage stories pilot initiated.	Year-end climate reporting completed. Climate heritage stories pilot reviewed, with governance and resourcing implications documented.	80,000 -
28	Deliver County Biodiversity Areas (CBA) pilot	Waterford CBA pilot completed and evaluated. Evaluation report	Data collation and site selection completed by end Q1. Technical	Field verification undertaken Q2.	Field verification completed Q3.	Evaluation and framework / guidance note completed Q4.	

No.	Activity	2026 Target Output	2026 Output				Budget (Version 1)
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
		and guidance note prepared, setting out lessons learned and options to inform consideration of wider application, subject to resources and partner agreement.	Working group meeting held			Technical Working group meeting held	
29	Commission national hedgerow management research study	Hedgerow study completed, producing final report with recommendations identifying evidence gaps, policy context and options for potential future Heritage Council focus.	Research brief finalised and contract awarded.	Research underway, including policy and evidence review.	Draft findings reviewed internally.	Final report delivered with recommendations.	30,000
30	Deliver faith communities biodiversity project	Faith communities' biodiversity booklet published, launched and actively disseminated through faith and	Publication finalised and launched Q1.	Dissemination through faith and community networks.	Continued engagement and promotion of material and 3 events through year.	End-year note on uptake and learning completed.	

No.	Activity	2026 Target Output	2026 Output				Budget (Version 1)
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
		community networks.					
31	Manage conservation and monitoring of the Dromore Lesser Horseshoe Bat site	Management, monitoring and maintenance arrangements implemented and reported on, with appropriate governance and technical oversight for this important site.	Site Caretaker procurement and appointment progressed.	Quarterly check-ins and site management underway.	Continued seasonal monitoring and management.	End-year site management and monitoring report completed.	5,000
32	Deliver the Shared Island Heritage Networks programme	Shared Island Heritage Networks programme operating with agreed governance and delivery arrangements. Cross-border engagement between local authority heritage professionals supported through structured network	Programme governance confirmed; delivery arrangements and work programme agreed; Data collation and comms strategy commissioned; engagement with partner organisations progressed.	Network development activity underway; cross-border engagement and collaboration supported; preparatory work for shared events progressed.	All-Island Heritage Professionals Conference delivered as a flagship Shared Island activity; ongoing network engagement supported.	Data collation and comms strategy delivered; Programme delivery reviewed; learning and outcomes documented to inform future years of project.	297,242

No.	Activity	2026 Target Output	2026 Output				Budget (Version 1)
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
		activity. Learning and collaboration advanced through flagship shared events and targeted programme activity					
<b>Communications &amp; Public Affairs</b>							
33	Delivery and sign off of Annual Report and Financial Statements	Completion by June 2026	Completion of first draft	Completion of financial statements and Annual Report.			€14,000
34	Events promoted and managed throughout National Heritage Week (NHW)	2,000 projects targeted for 2026 with 1,000 organisers.	Brief Local Authority Heritage Officers and Biodiversity Officers on theme and supports for 2025.  Develop new partnerships with	In-person training for event organisers.  Creation of content for advertising campaign.  Launch of heritageweek.ie	Full roll-out of advertising campaign across media for Heritage Week; radio, press etc.	Successful Heritage Week Awards Ceremony with Award winners. Review of Heritage Week with key stakeholders. Market Research of	€695,000

No.	Activity	2026 Target Output	2026 Output				Budget (Version 1)
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
			potential event organisers  Organise in-person training for event organisers.	website for events. Run organiser training events.  Implement website changes and improvements	Explore large-scale launch event for NHW  Organise traditional skills event at Heritage Council HQ in first weekend of NHW	public views of event. Initiate planning for 2026	

Payment of each draw-down is dependent on compliance with the procedures and satisfactory progress on the objectives and activities set out in this document. The Heritage Council will provide a written quarterly update on progress and expenditure pertaining to each of these targets and activities in advance of liaison meetings.

In addition, the Heritage Council agrees to provide:

- Annual profiles of expected draw-down broken down by the headings above;
- Reconciliations between draw-down and actual expenditure (broken down by the headings above) as and when required;
- All information in relation to financial and performance monitoring information requests within timeframes agreed with the Department.

The Department acknowledges that the Heritage Council may need to seek pre-payment of monies, including to facilitate the pre-payment of third parties. Where such occasions arise, the Heritage Council agrees to seek prior sanction from the Department and to complete and abide by the necessary pre-payment templates provided by the Department for this purpose. The Heritage Council also undertakes to abide by Circular 13/2014, "Management of and Accountability of Grants from Exchequer Funds", in this regard. This includes ensuring that the relevant Service Level Agreements with third parties are in place.

The above criteria are based on the budget approved by the Board of the Heritage Council.

## **8. Potential Risk Factors**

The Board should have formal and transparent arrangements for governance, audit and risk management and internal control in line with those identified in the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies.

The Heritage Council delivers some services through partners in schools and via public events and should have appropriate policies in place to meet its responsibilities towards children and other vulnerable members of the public in this regard.

The DHLGH will monitor risk at each quarterly meeting, seeking an update on risk and audit findings, disclosures in relation to breaches of internal control, suspected fraud, ongoing legal cases and any other information deemed important.

## **9. Role of the Board/Chairperson and Chief Executive**

The Heritage Council is required to ensure that best practice is adhered to in respect of oversight, reporting requirements and the appointment of Board members.

Role of the Board:

The Board has responsibility to set overall strategic direction for the Heritage Council and to put in place frameworks and mechanisms to assure oversight and compliance with the highest possible standards of public service.

Role of Chairperson

The Chairperson has responsibility for providing leadership and as Chairperson of Council is responsible for guiding the organisation's overall strategic direction and assuring compliance with the overall statutory requirements of Council.

Role of Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive, reporting through the Chairperson to the Council, has overall responsibility for advising the Heritage Council on, and ensuring effective achievement of, objectives in the exercise of its functions in accordance with the Heritage Acts, 1995 and 2018 and other statutory requirements and for the direction of all resources at Council's disposal to effect its functions as determined in successive strategic plans.

## **10. Flexibility and Amendment of Targets**

Where amendments become necessary, the Heritage Council and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage will agree amended targets / deliverables.

## **11. Monitoring Arrangements**

The Department will require a progress report on all key deliverables and corporate governance procedures to the relevant line sections in the Department. The timelines for these progress reports will be decided between the Department and the Heritage Council.

Where the Heritage Council does not deliver on the outputs specified in this agreement, the line unit will require a written explanation as to the reasons, including the steps taken by the Heritage Council to mitigate against non-delivery. Where the line unit is not satisfied with this account, the Department retains the right to withhold future allocations.

## 12. Duration and Signatories to the Agreement

The parties to the agreement in signing the agreement undertake as follows:

- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage – in line with government policy endeavours to secure the maximum available resources to support the Heritage Council in the exercise of its functions;
- The Heritage Council – in line with the resources at its disposal will use those resources in the most efficient and effective manner to deliver quality services to the public in accordance with its remit.

*Sarah Waters*

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Principal Officer  
National Built Heritage Service  
On behalf of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage  
Date:

*Marianne Moloney*

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Chairperson  
On behalf of the Heritage Council  
Date: