

Annual Report 1997

The Heritage Council

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Message from Council
Chief Executive's Report
Membership, Staffing
Meetings of the Council, The Plan 1997 – 2000, Communicating Effectively
A Community Approach – The Community Grants Scheme 1997
Collecting Data
Promoting Pride in Ireland's Heritage
Proposing Policy and Providing Advice
Grants and Funding
Financial Report
Appendix A – Membership of Standing Committees and Committees
Appendix B – List of Community Grants Awarded 1997

Message from the Council

The Council was delighted to launch its first strategic document The Plan 1997 – 2000 in October 1997. The Plan provides the policy framework to guide all the activities of Council up to the year 2000. It was particularly pleasing that Ms. Síle de Valera, T.D., Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands agreed to officially launch The Plan in the Bank of Ireland Arts Centre, Foster Place, Dublin.

At the core of the implementation of The Plan is the objective "to work with all interested agencies and individuals to identify, protect, interpret, promote and enhance Ireland's heritage". This spirit of partnership has pervaded almost everything the Council has achieved during 1997 and Council developed alliances with various agencies, groups and individuals on a variety of projects and initiatives, including separate examinations of the impact of current agricultural and forestry policies on Ireland's heritage. These are reported within the pages of this document.

In this partnership approach, Council has recognised the importance of developing a community-based approach to the protection, promotion and enhancement of our heritage. During the year, Council launched its first Community Grants Scheme allowing it to act as a catalyst in many community projects throughout the country. The only limit to the potential of this scheme is the limited resources which Council can offer to it, a shortfall we will be seeking to address in 1998.

The year also saw the Council develop its staff team with the appointment of five new members to what has now become an effective and efficient working unit. Having a comprehensive staff structure in place is essential if Council is to move forward and address its core functions of promoting pride in the national heritage and of proposing policies and priorities for that heritage. Sanction from the Minister for Council's full complement of staff is keenly awaited to allow Council to carry out its responsibilities efficiently and effectively. This report documents the aspects of progress to date.

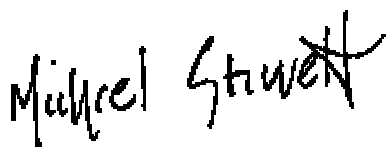


Freda Rountree
Chairperson

Chief Executive's Report

This report is submitted to the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, Ms. Síle de Valera, T.D., in accordance with section 22(1) of the Heritage Act, 1995. It outlines major aspects of Council's work during the first full twelve month period since my appointment as Chief Executive and illustrates what can be achieved by a focused and committed organisation in a very short space of time.

Building an organisation, and at the same time meeting our statutory responsibilities under the Heritage Act, 1995, could not have been achieved without the support and dedication of all those involved in our work. My thanks is extended to them all. Some very strong foundations have been laid during 1997 and the information and data collected will lead to clear and substantive policies for the national heritage of Ireland in 1998 and beyond. These policies are essential if we are to ensure that the value of that heritage is not further threatened, diminished or indeed simply taken for granted.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael Starrett". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Michael Starrett
Chief Executive

The Heritage Council

The Heritage Council was established in July 1995, under the Heritage Act, 1995, to propose policies and priorities for the identification, protection, preservation and enhancement of the national heritage. National heritage is defined in the Act as

- monuments
- landscapes
- archaeological objects
- seascapes
- heritage objects
- wrecks
- architectural heritage
- geology
- flora
- heritage gardens and parks
- fauna
- inland waterways
- wildlife habitats

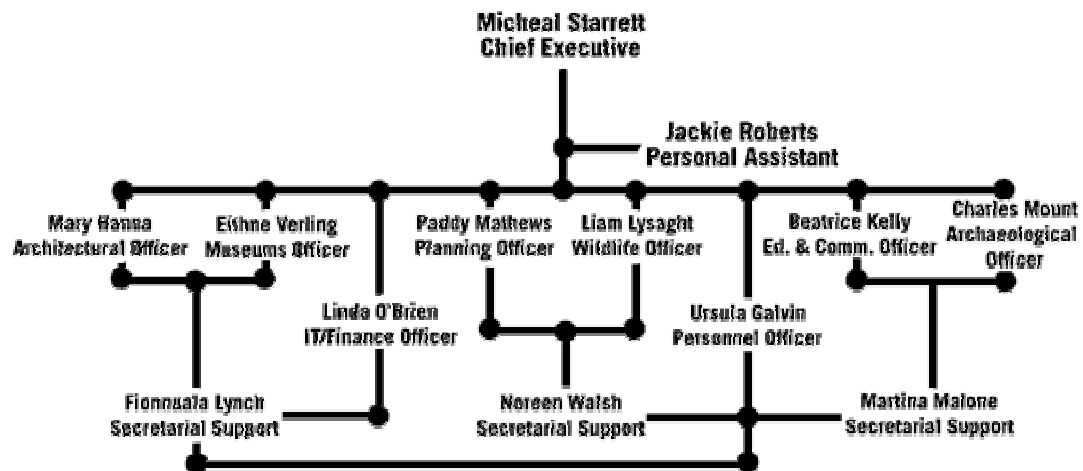
Membership of the Council

The members of the Council are appointed by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands. During the year, Michael Conaghan and Jim Reynolds resigned their positions. Both had served on the Council since its establishment. The Council wishes to thank them both for their commitment during this period. The Minister appointed David Leach to the Council in May 1997. The members of the Council during 1997 were:

- Freda Rountree (Chairperson)
- Jimmy Dunne
- Peter Pearson
- Anne Brennan
- Elizabeth Fahy
- Jim Reynolds
- Emer Colleran
- Orna Hanly
- Michael Ryan
- Michael Conaghan
- David Leach
- Micheline Sheehy Skeffington
- Michael Conry
- Anna McHugh
- David Slattery
- Ruth Delany
- Tomás Ó Caoimh
- John Waddell

Staffing

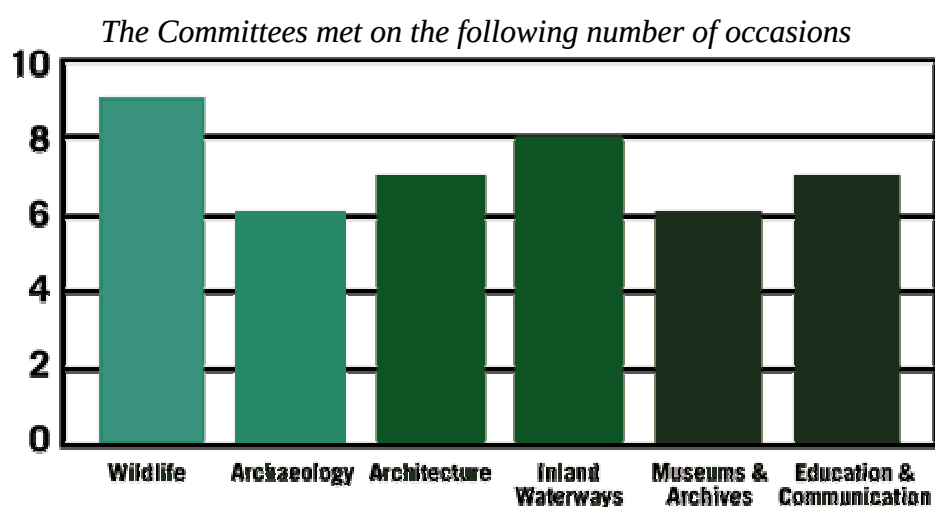
The Council continued to develop its staff structure with the appointment of an Information Technology/Finance Officer, Personnel Officer, Personal Assistant to the Chairperson and Chief Executive and two secretarial support staff. An additional member of the secretarial support staff was retained on a contract basis. The Council's complement of staff now totals twelve (plus one on contract) and its structure is illustrated below.



Council Meetings

The Council met on eight occasions during 1997:

In line with its policy to develop partnerships with local authorities, the Council held two of its meetings during 1997 in the headquarters of a local authority. At its meeting in May, the Council met with Sligo County Council/Sligo Corporation, and in September it met with Kerry County Council in Tralee. On these occasions, the Council meeting was preceded by a meeting with representatives of the authority's elected members and staff to discuss matters of mutual interest.



The Plan 1997-2000



The Plan 1997-2000

Following two policy workshops convened in 1996 for all Council, committee and staff members, the Council produced its first strategic document, The Plan 1997–2000. The Plan, which was launched by Síle de Valera, T.D., Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, in October 1997, provides a framework within which all of the Council's activities will be carried out.



At the launch of The Plan 1997-2000 (l-r) Michael Starrett, Chief Executive, Síle de Valera, T.D, Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, and Freda Rountree, Chairperson.

Communicating Effectively

A key to any organisation's success is clear and effective communication. This is particularly so in an organisation such as the Heritage Council which has set itself very clear objectives in terms of its modus operandi, objectives which see partnership and participation as essential ingredients. The Council undertook to produce a Communications Plan and a meeting for all Council, committee and staff members was held in September which produced a framework for the development of such a plan. The plan, which will be completed in 1998, will consider how the existing internal and external communication structures operate and how they can be communicated effectively to those using the Council's services.

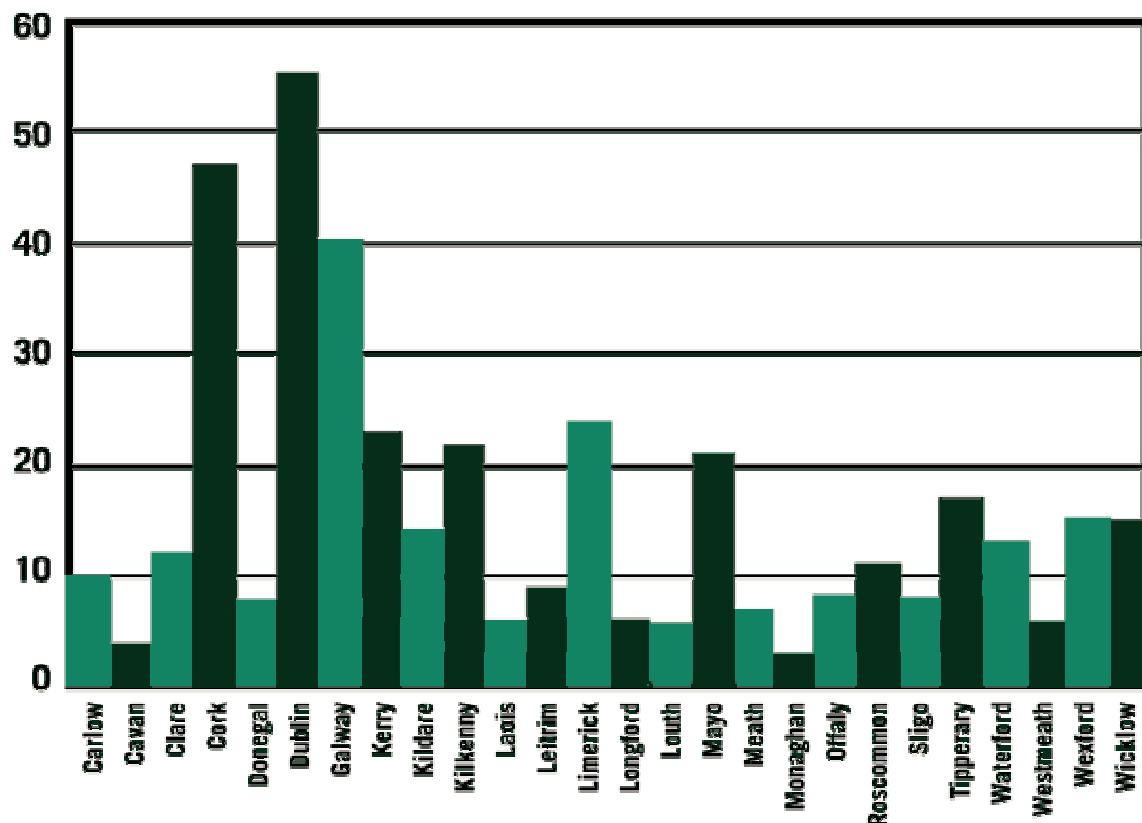
A Community Approach - The Community Grants Scheme 1997

One of the key priorities identified for 1997 was the development of a community heritage grants scheme. It is the Council's policy "to grant aid projects which meet Heritage Council criteria for both their quality of work and benefit to the national heritage" [The Plan 1997-2000, p6]. The objective of the 1997 Community Grants Scheme was to promote interest, education, knowledge and pride in, and to facilitate appreciation and enjoyment of the national heritage.



A selection of the archives and atefacts relating to Castlemore Colliery - a project which received funding from the Heritage Council under the Community Grants Scheme 1997.

The following chart shows the number of applications received from each county.



The total amount requested was £2,893,714. The total number of applications received was 410. The total cost of the projects for which funding was sought was £9,908,807.83.

The following criteria applied in the assessment of the projects:

Each project must:

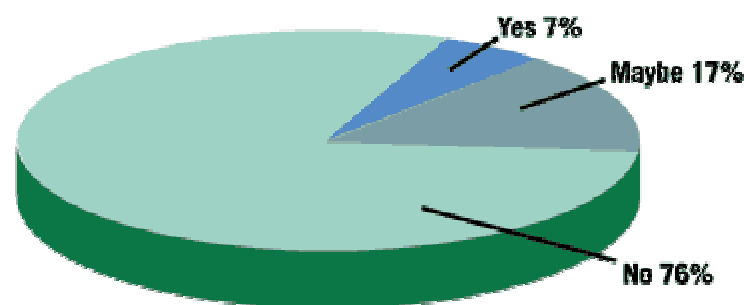
- have a strong community base
- be of benefit to a minimum of two aspects of the national heritage as set out in the Heritage Act, 1995
- demonstrate its sustainability in the long term
- make a contribution to public interest in heritage
- be of some significance to the community in which it is based.

The 410 applications received were assessed and divided into three groups:

Yes – projects worthy of immediate funding

Maybe – projects that were considered deserving of a grant if the appropriate funds became available

No – projects that were considered but were deemed ineligible



The way the Projects Rated

Of the 410 applications, 29 projects were funded which amounted to £155,305.

In all, 72 applications were considered to be good projects that could be awarded a grant if funds became available within the year. Of these, three applications were awarded grant-aid later in 1997 from funds transferred from other Council projects.

A total of 312 applications were not considered eligible for funding according to the particular criteria which were applied to the scheme.



Traditional harvesting of rye on Inis Meáin - a project which received funding from the Heritage Council under the Community Grants Scheme 1997.

Collecting Data

"The functions of the Council shall be to propose policies and priorities for the identification, protection, preservation and enhancement of the national heritage."
[Heritage Act, 1995, Section 6(1)]

Collecting data remained one of the Council's primary areas of work during 1997. Accurate data and information on the heritage is essential for the formulation of effective policies.

Audit of National Expenditure on Heritage

The report of an audit of state sector expenditure on heritage at a national level, which was commissioned by the Council in 1996 and carried out by the Business School, University College, Dublin, was completed during 1997.

The report which covers the period 1994-1996 will be updated and published in 1998.

Survey of Ecclesiastical Heritage

In February, the Council launched a nationwide survey of the churches and places of worship of the Roman Catholic, Church of Ireland, Methodist, Presbyterian and other denominations. The objective of the survey is to document each church building and its heritage of fixtures, fittings and moveable objects.

The survey has been developed by the Council's Working Group on the Ecclesiastical Heritage which first met in December 1995. The complete survey is in four stages:

- Basic inventory of the buildings
- Full building inventory including interiors
- Core data index for objects
- Professional documentation and conservation report depending on significance and particular conservation needs of a building or object.

Stage one of the survey was launched at a major seminar hosted by the Council in Kilkenny Castle on 5 February 1997, attended by 260 delegates, comprising clergy of all denominations, conservation architects, representatives from conservation bodies and interested individuals. The speakers, including Archbishop Francesco Marchisano, Pontifical Commission of the Cultural Heritage of the Church, addressed a wide range of issues, including the experience of similar surveys abroad, the problems encountered with the conservation of stained glass and stonework, and general good housekeeping practices which could be adopted by all curators of church buildings.



Archbishop Francesco Marchisano, Pontifical Commission of the Cultural Heritage of the Church; Nuala Turner, National Museum of Ireland,; Dr. Cristina Carlo-Stella, Pontifical Commission; Beatrice Kelly, Heritage Council and Fr. Thomas Ó Caoimh, Heritage Council, in Rome in preparation for the nationwide survey of churches in Ireland which is being co-ordinated by the Council

Building regulations and Historic Buildings

The Council commissioned a research project on the impact of the regulatory environment on historic buildings. Consultants were appointed to the project in December, 1997. The consultants are to report to the Council in Spring of 1998. These findings will serve to guide the Council's policy advice to the government in this area.

Courthouses Survey

Extensive discussions took place between the Council and the Department of Justice in relation to the Department's programme of courthouse refurbishment and upgrading. A desk study was carried out on courthouses in use, and an inventory has been commissioned which will be completed by Autumn 1998. This document, which will be presented to the Department of Justice, will provide it with a useful tool in planning its programme of conservation works.

Impact of Current forestry Policy on Aspects of Ireland's Heritage

The Council commissioned a major review of the impact of current forestry policy on aspects of Ireland's heritage. The review is being carried out by Environmental Resource Management, based in London. To oversee this review, a small working

group was established, comprising representatives from the Council, the Forest Service, Teagasc, Coford and Crann. This report will be completed in Spring 1998.

Impact of Agricultural Schemes and Premia Payments on Aspects of Ireland's Heritage

The Council commissioned a review of the main agricultural schemes and premia payments which have the greatest impact, both positive and negative, on Ireland's biodiversity.



A vanishing practice - traditional mixed farming, Connemara, Co. Galway

The report is being carried out by David Hickie, Edward Smyth, Ute Bohnsack, Sue Scott and David Baldak. A small working group was established to oversee the review, comprising representatives from the Council, the Department of Agriculture and Food and IWC/ Birdwatch Ireland. This report will be completed in Summer 1998.



Severe peat erosion due to overgrazing in the Sheeffry Mountains, Co. Mayo

Countryside Bird Survey

The Council took the initiative in facilitating the establishment of the Countryside Bird Survey, a nationwide monitoring scheme which tracks the populations of our common song birds from year to year. This survey is a partnership venture between the Council, IWC/Birdwatch Ireland and Dúchas – The Heritage Service.

Archeology

Four major data collection and research projects which were the subject of grant-aid from the Council were completed during 1997: the ArchaeoGeophysical Imaging

Project at Rathcroghan, Co. Roscommon, the cataloguing and analysis of Irish stone axes as part of the Irish Stone Axe Project, the programme of dating wooden containers from Irish bogs, and a study of the cross inscribed slabs and pillar stones of north-west Ireland.

Photographic Surveys of Grand and Royal Canals

In 1996, the Council commissioned a photographic survey of features of the Royal Canal including bridges, lock houses, canal stores, and ancillary features. The survey was completed in early 1997 and in the autumn, a similar survey of the Grand Canal commenced, to be completed in Spring 1998.

Industrial Heritage Record Project

Industrial heritage has, to date, always been a relatively neglected aspect of our heritage. In order to assess the extent and quantity of this important resource, the Council commissioned Fred Hamond to carry out a scoping report on the methodology of recording industrial heritage. It is intended to follow this survey in 1998 by engaging a consultant to carry out a map-based survey, being the first stage of a more comprehensive survey. It is proposed that this work will be carried out in association with the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

Pilot Survey of Museum Collections

This project, which was carried out in partnership with the Irish Museums Association, involved the surveying and inventorising of museum collections in three counties - Mayo, Tipperary S.R., and Longford. The information collected will be published in 1998. The information contained in the report will inform a number of key policy areas of the Council's work.

Local Authority Curators Group Computerisation Project

This project, initially established in 1992 by the former National Heritage Council, reflects the Heritage Council's ongoing support of county museums. The project supports the employment of an assistant in seven county museums to input the records of the collection onto a computer database. Funding for this project is provided on a partnership basis with the local authorities. To date, almost £250,000 has been invested in this project.



Pat Holland, Curator, Tipperary (S.R.) County Museum, inputting data into the museum's computerised registration system.

Promoting Pride in Ireland's Heritage

"The Council shall in particular promote interest, education, knowledge and pride in, and facilitate the appreciation and enjoyment of the national heritage."

[Heritage Act, 1995, Section 6(3)(1)(a)]

The level of interest in heritage and environmental issues has undoubtedly been on the increase in Ireland over the past ten years. Effecting this change in people's perceptions of heritage and raising awareness of it is a key function of the Heritage Council. The negative image of heritage conservation, held by many as something which is continually in opposition to "development", must be changed. Following the commitment to sustainable development undertaken by Ireland at the World Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, it is no longer realistic to view conservation and development as alternatives. Such a shift in attitudes cannot, however, be expected to occur overnight, and the Heritage Council has put in place a number of initiatives which will help to ensure that such change does take place.

Architectural Conservation Seminar

In November, a conservation seminar for architects was held in Kilkenny in association with the Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland. It was attended by approximately 75 delegates and was a very useful contribution to the dissemination of information about conservation among the architectural profession.

Archaeology

A number of publications were supported financially by the Council during the year, including *Tara: An Archaeological Survey*, by Conor Newman and *Late Medieval and Viking Waterford – Excavations 1986-92*, by Maurice Hurley and Orla Scully.



The launch of the British and Irish Archaeological Bibliography in Dublin Castle on 5 June 1997. (l-r) Dr. Michael Ryan, Chairperson, Standing Committee on Archaeology; Dr. Philip Dixon, President, Council for British Archaeology; Freda Rountree, Chairperson, Harold Fish, Director in Ireland, The British Council

Multimedia Project

In 1996, the Tipperary S.R. County Museum in Clonmel was awarded a grant to develop and install a multi-media programme designed to provide information to visitors on the work of the museum, details of the Kiely collection of sporting

memorabilia, and information on other local authority museums. The project was completed towards the end of 1997.

Millennium Project - Pilgrim Paths

The Council initiated a millennium project during the summer and appointed a part-time co-ordinator in September. A steering group to develop the project was set up in July comprising members of the Heritage Council, the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, Bord Fáilte and the National Waymarked Ways Committee.

The objective of this project is to develop and support a network of walking routes along medieval pilgrim paths in association with local communities. The aim is to raise awareness of the different aspects of heritage, built and natural, encountered along the routes while contributing to sustainable tourism and community development. The overall project will take three years concluding in June 2000.

Caring for our Cultural Heritage Exhibition

In July 1997, an exhibition of the furniture from Headfort House, Co. Meath, was opened by Síle de Valera, Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, in Kilkenny Castle. The furniture was rescued from auction in London at the end of 1996, by the Council in association with the then Department of Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht, and the National Museum. The exhibition is hosted by the Council in association with Dúchas – The Heritage Service.

Semi-Natural Woodlands Project

The Council facilitated a series of meetings with a view to organising a millennium project around Ireland's semi-natural woodland resource. Other organisations involved in this initiative include The Forest Service of The Department of The Marine & Natural Resources and Dúchas The Heritage Service – The National Parks & Wildlife Service. The purpose of the project is to put in place a strategy to protect and enhance naturally occurring woodlands, in order to ensure that future generations can have the benefit of this biological diversity.

Gulbenkian / Heritage Council Museum of the Year Award

In 1997 the Council was invited to become a full partner with the Gulbenkian Foundation in the Museum of the Year Award scheme, in association with the Northern Ireland Museums Council which administers the scheme. The Council nominated two judges to the selection panel and introduced two new categories to the scheme. The 1997 awards ceremony was held in the Freemason's Hall, Dublin, in December, where six awards and three commendations were made.

22 entries competed for the six major awards, each worth £2,500.

- Best Large Museum Award – The Ulster Museum, Belfast
- Best Smaller Museum Award – The Hunt Museum, Limerick
- Commendation – Kerry County Museum, Tralee, Co. Kerry

- Best Museum Education Project Award – Irish Museum of Modern Art, Royal Hospital, Kilmainham
- Commendation – The Ulster Museum, Belfast
- Most Improved Voluntary Museum – Milmount Museum, Drogheda, Co. Louth
- Commendation – Culkin's Emigration Museum, Dromore West, Co. Sligo
- Best Collections Care Award – Tipperary (S.R.) County Museum, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary
- Best Local Museum Award – Down County Museum, Downpatrick, Co. Down

Tidy Towns Award

In 1997 the Council awarded a prize of £2,000 for the best heritage initiative in the Tidy Towns Competition which is organised by the Department of the Environment and Local Government. Entrants for this award should aim to build on and facilitate increased understanding, appreciation, enjoyment and conservation of the heritage of a town or village and its hinterland. Projects must be carried out in accordance with best conservation practice and the promotion of sustainable activities in relation to the national heritage.

The 1997 award was presented to the Four Roads-Tisrara Tidy Towns Committee for its work in conserving the Tisrara medieval church and graveyard, Co. Roscommon.



Anna McHugh, Council Member, presenting the Heritage Council award to Fr. Francis Beirne, Four Roads-Tisrara, Co. Roscommon

Aer-Lingus young Scientists Award

The Council sponsored six awards for heritage projects in the Aer Lingus Young Scientists Award 1997. The recipients of the awards were:

- Jerry Martin, St. Flannan's College, Ennis, Co. Clare.
- Lisa Bennett, Loreto Secondary School, Navan, Co. Meath.
- Shirley Armitage, Marie Cormican and Denis Duggan, Borrisokane Community School, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary.
- Hilary Duggan, Anne Fennessy and Caroline O'Dwyer, Scariff Community College, Co. Clare.
- Joanne Kelly and Erin Clarke, St. Joseph's Grammar School, Donaghmore, Co. Tyrone.

- Mairead Walsh, Jennifer O'Rourke and Mary Moore, Brigidine Secondary School, Mountrath, Co. Laois.

Glór na nGael Award

The Council also sponsored awards in the Glór na nGael competition in 1997. It presented two awards to a publication and a project that promote the use of bilingualism in the heritage sector. The awards, of £750 each, were presented to Oideas Gael for the best publication for their guide book, and to Ionad Deirbhile Teo, for a community-based heritage centre on the Mullet peninsula.

Proposing Policy and Providing Advice

"The Council shall in particular co-operate with public authorities, educational bodies and other organisations and persons in the promotion of the functions of the Council."

[The Heritage Act, 1995, Section 6(1)(3)(b)]

An important responsibility for public policy makers is to assess the impact which its policies are having on both its own and other sectors. The generally low level of integration which exists between public sectors in Ireland means that the negative impacts of many public policies go unchecked and the policy, therefore, remains unchanged. During 1997, the Council undertook several initiatives to assess the impact of a range of public policies on the national heritage.

Urban Archeology in Ireland

The Council commissioned a major review of the working, regulation and results of urban archaeological activity in Ireland. The study, which will be completed in 1998, is being carried out by the Oxford Archaeological Unit.

Archeology Guidelines

The Council made observations on both the policy document and the draft guidelines on excavation licensing issued by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands. A submission was also made to the Environment Section of the then Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry in relation to the revision of its Forestry and Archaeology Guidelines.

Irish Archeological Wetlands Unit and Irish Peatlands



Excavation by the Irish Archaeological Wetland Unit of a late bronze-age trackway at Derryoghil, Co. Longford.

Ireland currently has more than twice the number of archaeological sites in peatlands than are known from the rest of Western Europe. A large proportion of these sites are being destroyed or are severely threatened. In 1997, the Council submitted a policy paper on the Irish Archaeological Wetland Unit and Irish peatlands to the Minister for

Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, highlighting its concerns for this important natural, archaeological and cultural resource. The Council made recommendations for its future protection in an integrated manner.

Electricity Supply Board

Following discussions and consultation with the Electricity Supply Board (ESB) in relation to the demolition of the cooling towers at Portarlinton and Allenwood, a formal consultation structure has been put in place, with regular meetings. As a result of this, the ESB has agreed to formulate a conservation policy and a policy for the decommissioning of buildings and other infrastructure considered to be of heritage value.

National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

The Heritage Council was invited to nominate a representative to the Advisory Committee on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. Professor Loughlin Kealy was nominated by the Council and is the liaison between it and the Inventory. The Council considers this to be an essential element in the proposal of policies and priorities for the architectural heritage.

Draft Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Forestry Developments

The Council submitted detailed comments on the draft guidelines circulated by the Department of the Environment.

Proposed Land Exchange at Killarney National Park

The Council recommended to the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, not to proceed with the proposed land exchange at Killarney National Park as part of a proposed golf course development. The Council's advice was given on the basis that the proposal would be of no net benefit to our natural heritage.

Comments on Wicklow Mountain National Park Study

The Council made a detailed submission to the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, on the draft Wicklow Mountains National Park Study. This was circulated for comments to all interested parties.



A view of Rindoon, Co. Roscommon, looking out onto Lough Ree. The Council

carried out an assessment of the area as a first stage in the preparation of a management plan which will be completed in 1988

Review of Section 26, Wildlife Act, 1976

Arising from a controversy surrounding the granting of a licence to the Ward Union Hunt by the then Minister for Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht under Section 26 of the Wildlife Act, 1976, the Council was asked to provide advice on licences issued under this section of the Act. The Council invited submissions from the general public on the granting of licences, and approximately 1300 individual submissions were received. A consultant was commissioned to undertake the review and to provide information to enable the Council to provide advice to the Minister. This advice will be communicated to the Minister in 1998.

An Evaluation of Environmental Designations in Ireland

The Council produced a second edition of this publication, which includes an updated section on the Habitats Directive, and a new section in which the Council proposes a number of recommendations for the effective implementation of the Directive.

A Review of the Current Situation in Genealogy

During 1997, the Council was requested by the then Department of Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht, to carry out a review of genealogical policies, practices, resources and sources on a national basis. A public consultation process commenced in September as a first step to the review. Recommendations will be made to government towards the end of 1998.

Development of an Accreditation and Standards Policy for Museums and Heritage Institutions

The development of an accreditation and standards policy for all museums and heritage institutions is central to the Council's work in the area of museums. In 1997 a draft set of standards for museum and heritage institutions with collections was prepared and a strategy was devised to facilitate the development of this policy and to incorporate a public consultation process into its development. It was agreed that participation in the registration/accreditation scheme for museum standards would be voluntary, inclusive and open to all collecting institutions.

A Training Strategy for Museological Education in Ireland

A report was commissioned by the Council in 1996 in partnership with the Northern Ireland Museums Council and the Arts Administration Department of University College, Dublin, to assess the training needs of the museum sector, north and south, and the courses/programmes available to those interested in training within this sector. The report, which was completed in 1997, highlights the need for a training strategy for this sector. Preliminary work in this area was begun towards the end of 1997.

A Review of the Role of the Heritage Council in the Planning Process

In September 1997, the Council published a consultative paper containing a series of proposals regarding its role in the planning process. The paper was circulated widely to all planning authorities, government departments, professional institutions, non-governmental organisations, and other interested organisations and individuals. The paper proposed that in pursuing its role in the planning process, the Council should provide advice to central government, regional authorities and planning authorities on the preparation of their policies, plans and programmes as they relate to the national heritage. A report on the consultative process and the Council's position paper on the role it will adopt in the planning process will be published in 1998.

Review of the Planning Legislation as it Impacts on our National Heritage

In August 1997, the Minister for the Environment and Local Government initiated a review of planning legislation. The Council made a submission to the review in October 1997, pointing out the negative impact on our heritage caused by deficiencies in both the legislation and the operation of the planning system. The submission covers, inter alia, areas such as the structure of the local authority development plan, the need for regional planning guidelines and a national planning framework, increasing public participation in the planning process, the introduction of Special Industrial Zones, and the treatment of local authority development in the planning process.

Planning Referrals

During 1997, the Council received 627 individual planning applications from 40 planning authorities under Article 32 of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Regulations, 1994. In addition to these individual applications, five planning authorities submitted a total of 70 planning lists containing planning applications received by each of the authorities.

Under Articles 5 of the Planning Regulations 1994, the Council also received a number of draft Development Plans for comment. During 1997, the Council made a total of 12 submissions to Development Plan reviews to the following planning authorities:

County Councils

Dún Laoghaire/Rathdown County Council, Laois County Council, Longford County Council.

County Borough Corporations

Cork Corporation, Dublin Corporation, Galway Corporation.

Urban District Councils

Athlone UDC, Ballyshannon UDC, Birr UDC, Enniscorthy UDC, Longford UDC, New Ross UDC.

Grants and Funding

Backlog of Grants

The Council decided at the beginning of 1997 not to accept grant applications until the considerable backlog of architectural grants had been cleared. This backlog was carried over from the former National Heritage Council in the form of outstanding offers and of applications which had not yet been assessed. By the end of 1997 a large proportion of these applications had been cleared.

Strengthening the Protection of the Architectural Heritage

The Council noted with regret the delay in enacting the necessary legislation to implement the recommendations of the Report of the Inter-Departmental Working Group on Strengthening the Protection of the Architectural Heritage, and putting the necessary funding in place. The Council made every effort, in meetings and representations with various government bodies, to encourage the passage of this legislation through the Dáil.

Contingency Fund

The Council established a contingency fund for 1997 of £150,000.

Part of this was used to publish a conservation report on the early 18th century Buncrana "Castle" in Donegal. The condition of the roof of the house was causing considerable risk to the building. The house had been the subject of an application for grant assistance to the former National Heritage Council. In view of the importance of the building and the level of risk, the Council commissioned the conservation report. On the basis of the report the Council decided to fund the restoration of the roof from the contingency fund. A substantial proportion of the timbers were retained, and while extensive work remains to be done, repairing the roof has been an important step in securing the future of this significant building.



Buncrana "Castle", Co. Donegal, before and during the restoration of the roof of the building

Administering Grants

Representatives from the Council met with Historic Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage during the year, and much useful information was collected on the administration of grant funding for heritage projects. The designing of a grants

database was initiated during the year, which will provide the Council with an objective system of processing applications for grant assistance in all future schemes.

Financial Report

SUMMARY OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 1997 (SUBJECT TO AUDIT)

	1997
	IR£
Income	
Oireachtas Grants	
Administration (Exchequer funded)	702,000
Capital Grant (National Lottery funded)	1,809,000
Non-Capital Grant (National Lottery funded)	990,000
Total Income	3,501,000
Expenditure	
Grant to The Discovery Programme Ltd.	630,000
1997 Community Based Grant Scheme	126,127
Archaeology	139,891
Architecture	1,084,361
Thatch	42,700
Education & Promotion	212,907
Museums & Archives	103,895
Wildlife	158,225
Planning	7,459
Waterways	2,954
Administration	719,904
Total Expenditure	3,228,423
There is a further analysis of expenditure on pages 21 — 23	
Surplus for the year	272,577
Deficit at 1 January 1997	(243,686)
Balance at 31 December 1997	28,891

The Financial Statements of the Heritage Council are subject to audit by the Comptroller & Auditor General.

**EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31
DECEMBER 1997 (SUBJECT TO AUDIT)**

	1997
	IR£
Grant to The Discovery Programme Ltd.	630,000
The Discovery Programme Ltd. is a company limited by guarantee and is funded by the Council. The purpose of the Programme is to enhance our understanding of Ireland's past through a major programme of research and archaeological excavation. The Heritage Council appointed the Chair of the Programme's directorate on the approval of the Minister, as well as three of its Directors.	
1997 Community Based Grant Scheme	126,127
Archaeology	
ArchaeoGeophysical Imaging project	12,232
Irish Stone Axe project	33,064
Pilot Study of Archaeological Landscapes	2,500
Radiocarbon dating of wooden vessels	2,500
Restoration of Ballinakill Abbey	9,965
Support for British & Irish Archaeological Bibliography	13,000
Palaeoecological investigations at Céide Fields	5,063
Viking & Medieval Excavation report	10,000
Cross slab survey	9,908
Irish Urban Archaeological Survey	13,483
Rindoon Survey	7,502
Restoration of burial ground	3,000
Impact of forestry report	1,780
Archaeological survey of Tara Publication	10,000
Other reports & surveys	2,987
Conferences & honoraria	2,907

Total	139,891
Architecture	
Grants towards repair & restoration of properties of architectural merit	1,023,365
Professional services: reports & surveys on buildings & legal fees	48,597
Seminar	3,512
Conferences & subscriptions	1,761
Ecclesiastical survey	7,126
Total	1,084,361
Thatch	
Grants towards re-thatching of roofs	40,950
Professional services	1,750
Total	42,700
Education & Promotion	
TV Programme development	72,141
Publications: SHEER, The Plan 1997-2000 & Environmental Evaluations,	74,636
Pilgrim Paths Millennium project	4,703
Audit of State Sector Spend on Heritage	11,600
Hare Island Development Plan	4,600
Dredging lake at Rockwell College	36,918
Currach workshop	1,113
Award: Young Scientists Exhibition	900
Award: Irish American Cultural Institute	1,736
Award: Tidy Towns Competition	2,000
Seminar	2,560
Total	212,907
Museums & Archives	
Grants to museums to acquire heritage objects	19,000

Grant towards conservation of maps	2,030
Grant towards conservation of vestments	1,379
Museum multimedia project	24,805
Consultancy re National Maritime Museum	12,810
Exhibition of Headfort House furniture	4,684
Museums & collections survey	4,801
Funding towards curator at Foynes Museum	4,000
Museums computerisation programme	10,550
Award: Gulbenkian award scheme	11,379
Genealogy study	3,699
Other consultancies & reports	4,758
Total	103,895
Wildlife	
Araglin catchment study	36,690
Study of impact of forestry policy on heritage	33,262
Irish Wetlands Bird Survey	20,100
Purchase of Bat Roost	36,798
Irish genetic research foundation	3,500
Study on Irish Hare	1,700
Trinity College — Botanic Gardens	8,100
Survey of impact of agriculture on heritage	7,273
Study on White Strand, Doonbeg, Co. Clare	2,122
Study on Section 26 of Wildlife Act, 1976	3,699
Professional services	2,665
Conferences	2,316
Total	158,225
Planning	
Planning review publication	6,545
Other	914

Total	7,459
Waterways	
Professional services	1,604
Surveys & reports	1,350
Total	2,954
Administration	
Salaries	303,510
Members expenses	107,000
General office running expenses	309,394
Total	719,904

Appendix A

Membership of Standing Committees and Committees

Under the Heritage Act, 1995, the Minister may appoint three persons who are not members of the Council to each Standing Committee.

Council Members on Standing Committee on Wildlife

Emer Colleran (Chairperson), Michael Conry, Ruth Delany, Jimmy Dunne, Micheline Sheehy Skeffington

Members Appointed by the Minister

Alexander Butler, Anne Farrell, William Smith

Members Appointed by Council

Leo Hallissey, John O'Halloran

Council Members on Standing Committee on Archaeology

John Waddell (Chairperson), Michael Conaghan*, Tomás Ó Caoimh, Michael Ryan, David Slattery

Members Appointed by the Minister

Ted Creedon, Michael O'Hanrahan, Primrose Wilson

Members Appointed by Council

Terry Barry, Mary Cahill, Chris Lynn**, Barry Raftery

Council Members on Standing Committee on Architectural Heritage

David Slattery (Chairperson), Orna Hanly, David Leach, Tomás Ó Caoimh, Peter Pearson, Jim Reynolds*, John Waddell

Members Appointed by the Minister

William Houlihan, Loughlin Kealy, Deirdre Kelly

Members Appointed by Council

Paul Arnold

Council Members on Standing Committee on Inland Waterways

Ruth Delany (Chairperson)

Members Appointed by the Minister

John Carolan, Cartan Finegan, Heather Thomas

Members Appointed by Council

Ian Bath, John Keane, Dick Warner

Council Members on Museums and Archives Committee

Michael Ryan (Chairperson), Anne Brennan, Orna Hanly, Anna McHugh, Tomás Ó Caoimh

Members Appointed by Council

Pat Cooke, Colleen Dube, Noel Kissane, Amanda Pedlow, Virginia Teehan, Peter Woodman

Council Members on Education and Communications Committee

Freda Rountree (Chairperson), Anne Brennan, Elizabeth Fahy, Anna McHugh, Peter Pearson

Members Appointed by Council

Ted Creedon, Leo Hallissey

* Tended resignation to the Minister in 1997

** Tended resignation to the Council in 1997

Appendix B

List of Community Grants Awarded 1997

EMPLAGRI LIMITED £10,000

restoration of the late nineteenth century walled Italian gardens at Old Connaught Avenue, Bray, Co. Wicklow

SANCTA MARIA COLLEGE, LOUISBURGH, CO. MAYO £5,000

development of an area of school grounds as a wildlife habitat

COMHARCHUMANN INIS MEÁIN TEORANTA £10,000

conservation of rye growing on Inis Meain

DUNCANNON FORT TRUST, CO. WEXFORD £2,000

conservation of cannon for display at Duncannon Fort

CAIM COMORADH '98 £1,000

restoration of a 1798 grave memorial in Monart, Co. Wicklow

IRISH SEED SAVERS ASSOCIATION, SCARRIF, CO. CLARE £7,500

development of a heritage apple orchard with native Irish apple trees and planting of a garden with native Irish vegetables for seed collection and distribution

GALWAY CIVIC TRUST £10,000

restoration of the fishery tower at Wolfe Tone bridge, Galway

DEPARTMENT OF GEOLOGY, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK £1,345

purchase of a polyester resin replica of evidence of vertebrates walking on land – a tetrapod trackway in Devonian rocks – in Valentia to be displayed in Cork

IRISH PEATLAND CONSERVATION COUNCIL £5,000

production of a guide to outline the environmental benefits of group composting for wildlife, bogs, waste management and pollution caused by illegal dumping

NOREEN MOORE-HEENAN & MARY KELLY, ROSCREA, CO. TIPPERARY
£4,450

publication of a study pack for children on historical and archaeological sites in the Roscrea district

AVOCA PARK RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION £3,000

creation of a wildlife park in Blackrock, Co. Dublin

TRANSPORT MUSEUM OF IRELAND £5,000

to complete the restoration of a 1937 Leyland TD4 Titan bus which was the first double decker in the Dublin fleet

OLD CARLOW SOCIETY £3,010

to conserve the collection of administrative documents,

dating back to 1670, compiled by Robert Jackson (the Jackson collection), a quartermaster at Carlow Military Barracks

EAST CLARE HERITAGE CO. LTD., TUAMGRANEY, CO. CLARE £3,000
to plant trees and shrubs as a memorial of the famine

NORTH WICKLOW COASTAL ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP £2,500
to conserve and protect the flora and fauna in the Murrough coastal wetland in North Wicklow by planting copses of broadleaf trees and shrubs and erecting bat boxes and owl nest boxes

ELPHIN AREA COMMUNITY ENTERPRISES LTD., CO. ROSCOMMON £4,000
to provide a traditional milling operation for local specialist farmers, a threshing and harvesting operation, and an explanation booklet on the working of a windmill

COMHAR CAOMHAN TEORANTA, INIS OÍRR, ÁRAINN, CO. NA GAILLIMHE £3,000
to publish and display placenames of the island in map form

INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND, KILDARE BRANCH £4,500
to complete an inventory of the flora and fauna resources of Ballynafagh lake, and to seal the valves at Lynch's lock to prevent the water levels in the lake from dropping any further

CRANN LEITRIM £10,000
to carry out a survey of hedgerows of South Leitrim and to re-introduce environmentally sensitive and practical hedgerow management to ensure the long-term survival of this important resource as a wildlife habitat

ST. FINTAN'S CHURCH, DURROW, CO. LAOIS £5,000
to restore the 1797 Samuel Green pipe organ in St. Fintan's Church

FETHARD HISTORICAL SOCIETY £2,000
to preserve, catalogue, print and publish the Grove House photographic collection which were taken at the end of the nineteenth century, and comprise approximately six hundred 1/4 and 1/2 plate glass negatives

CASTLECOMER DEMESNE COMPANY £5,000
to catalogue and preserve archival material and colliery maps from the Castlecomer Colliery Office, dating from 1800 to 1916

LISSARD FOUNDATION, SKIBBEREEN, CO. CORK £10,000
to introduce a reed bed filtering system to deal with pollutants entering Lough Abisdealy

FOYNES FLYING BOAT MUSEUM, CO. LIMERICK £2,500
to design a complete conservation plan and to purchase archival boxes and other storage equipment to conserve photographic material, paper archival material, clothing and equipment

CLONFERT DEVELOPMENT GROUP, CO. GALWAY £5,000

to carry out a complete survey of the west doorway of Clonfert Cathedral and produce a conservation report

SCART HOUSE, CO. KERRY £10,000

to restore and re-decorate the ceilings of Scart House

AN ÓIGE, FOULKS RATH CASTLE, CO. KILKENNY £10,000

to effect repairs to the roof, including the chimney, to replace the floor and install heating in the dining hall, and restore the well in the courtyard

NORTHSIDE FOLKLORE PROJECT, CORK £4,000

to purchase computer equipment to facilitate the establishment of a computer database to store the ongoing collection of folklore material in this community database.

FERDIA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, ARDEE, CO. LOUTH £7,500*

purchase of thirteen acres of Ardee bog for preservation

* This grant was not availed of