

## Heritage Council announce details of 2017 Grants Schemes

**€800K in funding available to community heritage projects nationwide**

### Online application process to open in March

**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2017:** The Heritage Council has today announced the details of its 2017 Heritage Grants Schemes under which €800k in funding will be available for projects under its **Community Heritage Grants Scheme** and **Thatch Conservation Scheme**.

Welcoming the announcement of the Heritage Council Grants Schemes, **Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Heather Humphreys TD**, said *“The recently launched Action Plan for Rural Development outlined my commitment to a community-led approach to rural development in our towns and villages. The Heritage Council’s Grant Schemes are a fantastic avenue for those across Ireland working tirelessly to protect and preserve their heritage to receive support.*

*Through the Thatch Conservation Scheme we will be able to ensure the future of historic buildings that are so central to the character of rural Ireland. Investment in heritage is an important element of the Rural Development plan, and I look forward to seeing the work that can be achieved over the coming months”.*

The Community Heritage Grant Scheme supports projects that promote an appreciation and enjoyment of heritage and make a lasting difference to heritage, people and communities. The Thatch Conservation Scheme aims to conserve thatched roofs, ensuring their viability and use as key elements of our cultural landscape into the future. Information booklets on both schemes are available on the Heritage Council website <insert link>.

**Commenting on the Schemes, Heritage Council Chief Executive, Michael Starrett** said *“we are delighted to be able to offer some support to community-based heritage projects this year. Every project that receives funding is unique to its local area and is vital in maintaining our distinctiveness as a country. This distinctiveness is the core of our tourism product, providing jobs and ensuring our places maintain a quality of life for the people who live there. We are looking for creative, engaging projects that provide a way for the public to learn about, and manage, our natural and cultural heritage.*

*The Heritage Council is grateful for the financial support provided by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Heather Humphreys TD that has made these grants possible.”*

The online application process will open on [www.heritagecouncil.ie](http://www.heritagecouncil.ie) on March 1st, with a closing deadline of 24<sup>th</sup> March at 5pm. All projects must be completed between 1<sup>st</sup> May and 17<sup>th</sup> November 2016.

It is hoped the grants scheme will reach out to new audiences and make heritage accessible to all including young adults, people with special needs and minority groups. The Heritage Council is looking for creative, engaging projects that provide a way for the public to learn about and manage our natural and cultural heritage. For the first time projects specific to National Heritage Week will be considered.

Further information on the 2017 Grants Scheme is available on [www.heritagecouncil.ie](http://www.heritagecouncil.ie)  
Ends

**Note to Editor:**

*The Heritage Council is the statutory body charged with identifying, protecting, preserving and enhancing Ireland's national heritage. National heritage includes Monuments, Archaeological objects, Heritage objects, Architectural heritage, Flora, Fauna, Wildlife habitats, Landscapes, Seascapes, Wrecks, Geology, Heritage gardens and parks, and Inland waterways.*

*Established under the Heritage Act 1995, and operating under the aegis of the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural Affairs and Gaeltacht Affairs, the Heritage Council provides advice to the Minister, and partners and networks with Local Authorities and a wide range of other organisations and individuals to promote Ireland's heritage.*

**Further information:**

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