

Heritage Plan Discussion Paper



Introduction

Wexford County Council are embarking on an exciting journey to develop our first County Heritage Plan. Heritage is an essential part of our identity, and it is important that we ensure its protection for future generations. The Plan will help preserve, protect, and promote the rich heritage of county Wexford.



This paper provides a background to the development of the Heritage Plan. It is intended to help start discussion on Heritage issues and priorities. For the Wexford Heritage Plan to be successful it is important that we hear the views of all residents, local organizations and stakeholders in Wexford's Heritage.



What is Heritage?

Heritage is defined in the Heritage Act, 1995 as including monuments, archaeology, heritage objects, architecture, flora, fauna, wildlife habitats, landscapes, seascapes, wrecks, geology, heritage gardens and parks and inland waterways.

Intangible cultural heritage such as songs, poetry, folklore, traditional crafts, language and sport are also included in our definition of heritage.



Heritage is therefore all around us, it is reflected in the landscape in which we live, and it is reflected in how we perceive that very landscape. Aspects of our heritage help to define us and they contribute to the development of a strong sense of identity and pride, making it a unique resource.

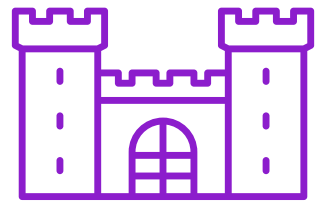
Wexford Heritage Overview



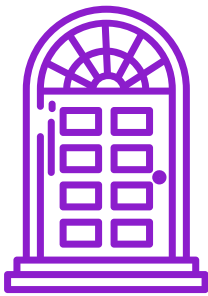
Recorded Monuments
4319



Historic graveyards
141



Castles
101



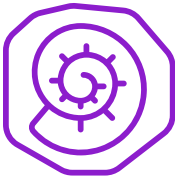
Protected Structures
1503



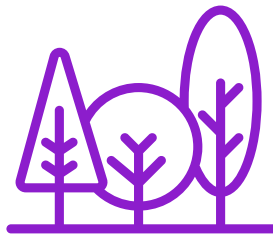
Architectural Conservation
Areas: 12



Thatched cottages
200+



Geological Heritage
Sites: 42



Special Areas of
Conservation: 12



Nature Reserves
3



Wexford's Heritage Officer

County Heritage Officers are employed by Local Authorities in partnership with the Heritage Council. They play a key role in promoting awareness, knowledge and pride in local heritage. They provide advice, guidance and information on various aspects of Irish heritage and heritage best practice.

Wexford's Heritage Officer, Colm Moriarty, will work closely with the Heritage Forum to prepare and implement a strategy for heritage in the county, i.e. the County Heritage Plan.



The Wexford Heritage Forum

The Heritage Forum is a non-statutory advisory group established by Wexford County Council to provide advice on the preparation and implementation of the County Heritage Plan.

Membership of the Forum is drawn from representatives of agencies with an interest or involvement in the natural, cultural and built heritage of Co. Wexford.

The role of the Forum is to collaborate with the Heritage Officer and the Heritage Team in writing the Local Authority Heritage Plan, to provide feedback and assistance in the implementation of the themes and actions of the plan, to monitor progress and to evaluate impacts of the plan.





What is a Heritage Plan?

A Heritage Plan is a county-wide strategy for the identification, protection, conservation, management, enhancement and interpretation of the built, natural and cultural heritage led by the local authority.

Preparation of a plan offers the opportunity to identify heritage issues and needs at county-wide level, and to address them locally, within a regional and national framework.

The overall goal is to protect, conserve and where appropriate enhance the natural, built and cultural heritage of the county and to encourage all to appreciate, enjoy, understand and care for our heritage.

It is intended that the new Heritage Plan will contain strategic aims and objectives. This will form the basis of an annual Action Plan to be devised and implemented each year based on the priorities agreed in the strategy.



Stages of development of Heritage Plan

1. PLAN PREPARATION

Agree process and time frame with Management Team and establish a Heritage Forum. Gather background data and identify gaps.

2. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Hold meetings and invite submissions from the public.

3. PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Identify heritage issues and needs, agree strategic objectives, and prepare a draft plan, liaising with colleagues and the Heritage Forum.

4. PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Draft Heritage Plan will go on display with a public consultation period taking place.

5. PLAN REVIEW

Present the updated draft plan to the Management Team and Special Policy Committee for comment/approval.

6. PLAN APPROVAL

Revise the draft plan and present it to the appropriate Special Policy Committee and full Council for approval.

7. PUBLICATION

Publish and launch the Heritage Plan.



Public Participation is essential

An important objective is to build public awareness and, ultimately, public support for the Heritage Plan. A sense of common ownership of the plan by all those who contribute to it, and by the wider public, is essential.

For the Heritage Plan to be
successful we need your input

It is essential for us to know your views on Wexford's Heritage. Sharing your opinions will help us identify local issues and develop actions for the County Heritage Plan.

Questions to think about:

What do you see as the biggest challenge facing Wexford's Heritage?

What actions would you like to see in the new Heritage Plan?

What overall goals should the Heritage Plan contain?



Ways to get involved

Pre-draft consultation timeframe: commences on Monday the 4th of August 2025 and all submissions are due by 4pm on Monday the 25th of August 2025 (closing date).

There are a number of ways you can make submissions at this pre-draft stage

Drop in meetings will take place at:

- Enniscorthy Library, August 11th, 11am - 1pm
- New Ross Library, August 12th, 11am - 1pm
- Gorey Library, August 12th, 5.30pm - 7.30pm
- Stella Maris Centre, Kilmore Quay, August 13th, 2pm - 4pm
- Wexford Library, August 14th, 5pm - 7pm

Written Submissions

- by writing to: Colm Moriarty, Heritage Officer, Wexford County Council, County Hall, Carricklawn, Wexford
- by email to: heritage@wexfordcoco.ie

Online Survey

- By completing an online survey on Wexford County Council's website:
<https://consult.wexfordcoco.ie/en/content/heritage-plan-survey>

