

# COUNTY MONAGHAN HERITAGE PLAN

2012 – 2017





# COUNTY MONAGHAN HERITAGE PLAN 2012 – 2017



PRODUCED BY SHIRLEY CLERKIN, HERITAGE OFFICER, MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL  
IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE HERITAGE FORUM





© 2013 Monaghan County Council

This publication is available from:  
The Heritage Officer  
Monaghan County Council  
Council Offices, The Glen, Monaghan

Phone: 047 73722  
Email: [shclerkin@monaghancoco.ie](mailto:shclerkin@monaghancoco.ie)  
Web: [www.monaghan.ie/heritage](http://www.monaghan.ie/heritage)

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission in writing of the publisher.

Graphic design by Connie Scanlon and print production by James Fraher, Bogfire [www.bogfire.com](http://www.bogfire.com)

This paper has been manufactured using special recycled fibres; the virgin fibres have come from sustainably managed forests; air emissions of sulphur, CO<sub>2</sub> and water pollution have been limited during production.

All photographs by Shirley Clerkin except Lord Rossmore's Tree (p.21) Eugene Clerkin; Indian Balsam (p.21) Carmel Brennan; White Clawed Crayfish (p.23) RSPB Images; Wrought Iron Gate (p.27) Shem Caulfield.



## Photographs

**Inside front cover:** Greater Butterfly orchid (*Magairlín mór an fhéileacáin*) a favourite of moths for its nectar, Tasson, Clontibret.

**Title page:** International Artist Blacksmith Forge In, Monaghan Town.

**Above:** Clones Lace, a type of Irish Crochet Lace, from the Monaghan County Museum collection. Introduced to Clones during the Famine by Mrs Cassandra Hand.

## CONTENTS

---

4	FOREWORDS
6	INTRODUCTION
8	COUNTY MONAGHAN HERITAGE FORUM
10	HERITAGE ACTION PLAN 2012-2017
12	THE HERITAGE OF MONAGHAN
13	GEOLOGY
14	LANDSCAPE
16	NATURAL HERITAGE
24	ARCHITECTURE
28	INLAND WATERWAYS
29	ARCHAEOLOGY
34	CULTURAL HERITAGE
34	LANGUAGE
34	FARMING AND HERITAGE
36	ACHIEVEMENTS OF HERITAGE PLAN 2006-201
38	COUNTY MONAGHAN HERITAGE FORUM MEMBERS
39	PROCESS

---



## FOREWORD FROM COUNTY MANAGER, DAVID FALLON

I am delighted to join with the Mayor of County Monaghan, Cllr Hugh McElvaney and the Chairperson of County Monaghan Heritage Forum, Mr George Knight in welcoming the publication of the second Heritage Plan for County Monaghan.

Our heritage is to be cherished and conserved and we are charged with those responsibilities. We must preserve, protect and perpetuate that heritage so that it can be enjoyed by this and successive generations. Heritage is all-encompassing in being physical, both natural and built, social, cultural and environmental. It must be acknowledged that, whilst it has been understood by past generations who regarded themselves as being custodians, there has been an increased awareness and appreciation in recent times. Public bodies such as Monaghan County Council are proactive in this respect in preserving and creating heritage.

The current plan has been informed by the active involvement of our wider community through the consultation process, the Heritage Forum and the Elected Members of the various Town Councils and County Council. This plan includes a Heritage Action Plan for the period 2012-2017 and outlines actions with a timetable and lists of delivery partners. These actions will be led by Monaghan County Council in collaboration with its partners. I am confident that this plan will be delivered and will contribute to the enrichment of the heritage of County Monaghan. I also look forward to the continued involvement of the Elected Members and commend them on their commitment to the adoption of heritage friendly policies.

I would like to thank the members of the Heritage Forum who always give freely of their time, energy and commitment and are a source of encouragement to the Council. May I also thank the Heritage Council for their continued involvement and support in developing the Monaghan Heritage Plan and look forward to future collaboration. Finally I wish to pay tribute to the Heritage Officer, Ms Shirley Clerkin for her valued work and contribution in the appreciation of the heritage of County Monaghan.

*Peter's Lake, Monaghan Town. This lake formed part of the star-shaped fort defensive structure for Monaghan Town during the seventeenth century.*

## **FOREWORD FROM MAYOR OF MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL, CLLR. HUGH MCELVANEY**

On behalf of Monaghan County Council, I am delighted to be associated with the Monaghan Heritage Plan adoption, publication and most importantly its implementation over the next five years.

County Monaghan is a unique county, located in the drumlin belt of little hills, with rich natural and cultural heritage both in its towns and villages and in the wider countryside. This heritage plan builds on the achievements of the previous heritage plan which was published in 2006 and implemented with enthusiasm by Monaghan County Council in association with its partners on the County Monaghan Heritage Forum.

I thank all those individuals and groups who care for and conserve their local heritage across the county, contributing to the character of Monaghan for residents and visitors alike. In particular I thank the members of the Heritage Forum, and the Heritage Office of Monaghan County Council. It is with pride that I look forward to the implementation of this County Monaghan Heritage Plan over the next few years.

## **FOREWORD FROM CHAIRPERSON OF COUNTY MONAGHAN HERITAGE FORUM, MR. GEORGE KNIGHT**

Since the launch of the first County Monaghan Heritage Plan in 2006 there have been remarkable changes financially and socially within Ireland. Despite all our recent setbacks, tourism based on our natural, built, archaeological and cultural heritage has never been so important. It is vital that this precious asset is protected at all costs. We must do this not just to attract visitors to our shores but for the benefit of future generations.

This second Heritage Plan for the county takes us forward to 2017 and forms the basis of our aspirations in this area up to that date. It has been formulated in consultation with many individuals and groups. I would like to thank all involved for their input, particularly our Heritage Officer Shirley Clerkin who has been the driving force behind the project and such an enthusiastic adviser and friend to all the forum members. Of course all our plans and recommendations can only be implemented with the goodwill and co-operation of our fellow inhabitants of the county.

This coming year County Monaghan in common with the rest of Ireland will be participating in the "Gathering" when we hope that many thousands of people with an Irish connection can be persuaded to come here. We can use this Heritage Plan as a basis to educate ourselves in the vast wealth of local historical knowledge that is all around us and by passing on this knowledge to our visitors ensure that they have a memorable time.

The period covered by this document includes a number of dates when we will be celebrating or remembering the centenary of important events in our past history. Two are of particular importance, the outbreak of the First World War and The Easter Rising. These will have great relevance to many people and will be acknowledged with dignity and respect.

I am sure I speak for my fellow Forum members when I say that we will do our best for as long as we serve on this committee to implement the proposals contained in this current Heritage Plan.

## INTRODUCTION

Heritage is a wide concept, closely related to the notion of “inheritance”. It not only encompasses anthropogenic creations, but also those resources formed long before the evolution of humans. In 1995, heritage was defined by Irish statute as “landscape, wildlife habitats, flora and fauna, inland waterways, monuments, archaeological objects, heritage objects and archives, architectural heritage, geology, heritage gardens and parks”. In reality however, it is bursting out of this definition to also encompass cultural heritage, placenames, folklore, music and language.



Ribwort Plantain (*Slánlus*), a common flower found in meadows and on waste ground. It has been identified in pollen records from 5000 years ago.

### A VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF HERITAGE IN COUNTY MONAGHAN

By conserving our heritage and creating new heritage assets, through creative and quality architectural design, retaining and enhancing our wildlife habitats and conserving our cultural heritage, County Monaghan will continue to be a place where people will want to live and work. It will be a place that we can be proud of because we can see and appreciate its character and uniqueness. Monaghan will continue to inspire art and creativity. We will be rooted and secure as a community and understand and work within environmental limits.

We want to empower the voice of heritage to ensure its role in society becomes central. We need to build connections, involve all stakeholders, value local distinctiveness and build trust between institutions and communities. We need to be proactive and to integrate heritage considerations into activities and sectors and value our sense of place.

If our heritage becomes part of our decision making, we will be able to preserve continuity to the past and we will make better decisions to ensure a sustainable future.

“I think now that the Spirit of Place has a more powerful attraction for us than friends or relations.

A tree, a stone or a field recreates for us the happiest — and the saddest which is the same thing — moments of our lives — In other words, our moments of most intense experience.”

— Patrick Kavanagh

*The Rossmore Monument, a Victorian drinking fountain, The Diamond, Monaghan. Designed by E.J. Tarver as a memorial to the 4th Baron Rossmore who died after a hunting accident at Windsor Castle in 1874 aged 23.*

“When we see land as a community to  
which we belong, we may begin to use it  
with love and respect.”

—(Aldo Leopold, Sand County Almanac).



## THE COUNTY MONAGHAN HERITAGE FORUM

Fully integrating heritage considerations into policy making and policy decisions is still in its infancy, but it is being furthered by European policies and programmes and by an increasing public voice. Locally, the Monaghan Heritage Plan will help to coordinate efforts to understand and conserve our heritage. The Heritage Plan is coordinated by Monaghan County Council and the Monaghan Heritage Forum.

The Forum aims to be representative of all stakeholders so that cohesive action can be taken to “protect and enhance the built, natural, cultural and community heritage of County Monaghan and to increase awareness, understanding, responsibility and enjoyment of it by all”. The forum recognises that all heritage is local whether or not it is of international, national or local importance and believes that the indigenous knowledge held by communities is vital to its understanding and conservation. The forum wants to foster advocacy for heritage protection and build and ownership of local heritage, to engender a collective responsibility and decision making to enable its continuity in a changing society.

The Monaghan Heritage Forum was established in April 2005. The role of the Heritage Forum is to advise on the preparation and development of the County Monaghan Heritage Plan. Members are drawn from statutory and non-statutory agencies, elected representatives, community and voluntary representatives representing different heritage interests. The Forum meets at least four times per year. A full list of members can be found in the appendices of the Heritage Plan.

“The forum recognises that all heritage is local . . .”



*A Heritage Tour visiting Mullyash Cairn, one of Monaghan's most important archaeological monuments dating from 4,000 BC. This stepped, two-tiered cairn with some of its original facing intact closely resembles that of Newgrange before it was restored and possibly contains a passage-tomb.*

## SUPPORT FOR THE HERITAGE PLAN

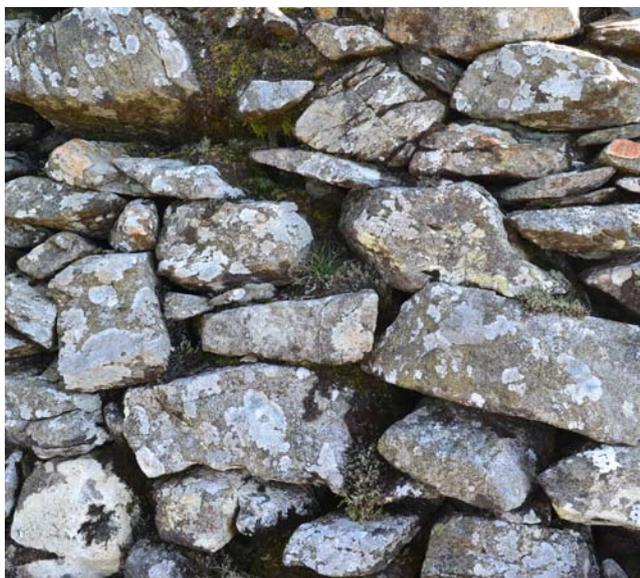
The Heritage Council, located in Kilkenny is the national body that supports the implementation of the County Heritage Plan through financial and technical assistance to Monaghan County Council. The Heritage Council seeks to protect and enhance the richness, quality and diversity of our national heritage for everyone. It works with its partners, particularly at local level, to increase awareness of our national heritage and to highlight its importance to public policy and everyday life. Their website is a useful resource [www.heritagecouncil.ie](http://www.heritagecouncil.ie). They also coordinate National Heritage Week [www.heritageweek.ie](http://www.heritageweek.ie) and research and promote best conservation practice for Ireland's heritage assets.



*An Artist Blacksmith at work during the International Forge In, Monaghan Town, June 2011.*



*Fen vegetation of mosses, flowering bogbean and sedges at Clarderry, 4.5km north east of Ballybay. A fen is a wetland system with a permanently high water level at or just below its surface. Its principal source of nutrients is from surface or groundwater and the substrate is an alkaline to slightly acidic peat soil.*



*A section of the tiered dry stone wall facing on Mullyash Cairn; each stone set in place six thousand years ago.*



*Common spotted orchid (Soó), Cornaboe.*

# HERITAGE ACTION PLAN 2012- 2017

## COLLECTING INFORMATION ON HERITAGE: SURVEY AND INVENTORIES

REF	ACTION
1	Conduct a survey to identify and evaluate the surviving historic designed landscapes in County Monaghan and promote the conservation of their built and natural character and heritage.
2	Undertake an audit of geological heritage sites within County Monaghan in conjunction with the Geological Survey of Ireland.
3	Conduct an ecological survey of bridge(s) and culverts to identify any impediments to fish passage or other animal passage and to identify measures that could be taken to remove these and other measures that would enhance the wildlife value of the bridges.
4	Use new technologies such as LIDAR in the survey, analysis and conservation of heritage.
5	Work with communities to compile information on holy wells, mass paths, mass rocks and other similar sites.
6	Undertake surveys and to create inventories of all types of heritage in the county as required.
7	Conduct a study of traditional farmsteads, to record and describe form, materials, and setting.
8	Implement recommendations made in Heritage Plan projects and conduct follow on projects where gaps have been identified in baseline information.
9	Identify, map and survey extant and potential archaeological features and fragments associated with the Black Pig's Dyke.
10	Develop an oral history project to record dialects in the county.
11	Support initiatives to research the impact of 1916 rising, World War I and associated political events on the heritage of the county, particularly where research is investigating neglected aspects of this period.
12	Continue to develop a Framework for Archaeological Research for Monaghan.

## CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF HERITAGE ASSETS

REF	ACTION
13	Develop a County Invasive Species Strategy for the dirty dozen invasive species and promote understanding of their eradication and management.
14	Develop a Heritage Assets Register for Monaghan County Council. Those properties of heritage significance owned or in the care and control of the Council. This register will include an inventory of the assets - built heritage, natural heritage, cultural landscapes and moveable heritage (not incl. museum collections) and also includes an action plan for the ongoing maintenance of each of those places.
15	Carry out an audit of all Protected Structures within Monaghan County Council's ownership and devise a management plan for these structures in order to demonstrate best practice with regard to the custodianship of Protected Structures.
16	Develop a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the county for integration into the next County Development Plan.
17	Develop county photographic archive.
18	Develop an archives management plan and system for material held within the local authority, museum and library services.
19	Implement the County Monaghan Biodiversity Action Plan and develop new plan in 2014 for years 2015 – 2020.

## BUILDING CAPACITY: EDUCATION, AWARENESS AND TRAINING

REF	ACTION
20	Ensure that heritage sites within the ownership or custodianship of Monaghan County Council are appropriately managed, signposted, interpreted and accessible. Information on these sites will be published.
21	Organise a bi-annual seminar on the care and maintenance of historic properties.
22	Organise a bi-annual seminar on the care and conservation of graveyards.
23	Promote literature/film/theatre/music written by authors and composers associated with County Monaghan.
24	Identify associations between historical figures and places or sites in Monaghan, encourage their conservation and make information available accordingly.
25	Support the continuation of crafts associated with heritage of the county such as Clones Crochet Lace and Carrickmacross Lace and crafts based on traditional skills including those needed for conservation.
26	Develop a series of heritage booklets and make them available on the internet.
27	Publish twice yearly e-newsletter “Monaghan Heritage Matters” and maintain heritage website.
28	Establish Annual Heritage Awards for projects / communities which have demonstrated best practice regarding heritage understanding, recording or conservation.
29	Use information collected in heritage plan projects for public awareness, education and training purposes.
30	Participate in and promote National Heritage Week, Biodiversity Day and other relevant heritage days.
31	Organise heritage conferences, seminars and tours on themes relevant to the conservation and promotion of Monaghan’s heritage.



Carved detail on the pulpit of St. Tighearnach's Church of Ireland, Clones. The present church, designed as a Gothic-revival Church, was first built in 1823 and is believed to be the fifth built on an important monastic site. Its interior is striking and spacious and has elegantly panelled boxed pews as well as wonderful treasures carved in marble including the font, the reading desk and the pulpit.

# HERITAGE OF MONAGHAN



*Meadow Brown (Domnóg Fbéir), one of the thirty-five butterfly species found in Ireland.*

## GEOLOGY

460 million years ago the area which became County Monaghan was on the margin of the Laurentian continent, lapped by the waters of the Iapetus ocean. The rocks of Ordovician and Silurian age—sandstones, siltstones and shales formed from sediments deposited on the submarine margin of this ancient continent at a depth of some 4000 metres.

The Iapetus Ocean eventually disappeared as two continents collided. The zone of this collision in Ireland is thought to run from County Louth to the Shannon Estuary. Mountains were formed through volcanic activity and the folding of rocks. This zone of activity runs right through Co. Monaghan, expressed in our bedrock, in the Castleshane (argillite) formation, Aghnamullen (turbidite) Member, Carrickatee (black shale, mafic volcanics and tuffs) Formation. A new continent called Pangea was also formed, of which Ireland was part, but located in equatorial latitudes.

Pangea was hot and arid, subject to flash floods that swept debris down from the mountains onto the adjoining plains. This geological period is represented by 'Old Red Sandstone', found north of the Sliabh Beagh area.

During the carboniferous period, the area that is Ireland was transformed into a region of warm tropical seas, vegetated swamps, deltas and trees. Typical rock formations as a result of this environment include the limestones, sandstones and shales present in the north of the County and the thin coal seams close to Carrickmacross deposited in an Equatorial Swamp or delta some 320 million years ago. The next period in our geological history, was characterized by a harsh, irregular desert environment. This resulted in the Kingscourt sandstone and gypsums, created as the saline lakes dried out.

The next period was characterized by the Pangean continent being forced apart, with the development of the Atlantic Ocean. Widespread igneous activity occurred on the margins of the rupture zone, remnants of which are preserved in Slieve Gullion in neighbouring Co. Armagh and also where fissures allowed basalt to develop at the surface such as is found at Knocknacran Mine.

Periods of glaciation and warmer interglacials followed, creating the drumlin landscape famous in Monaghan. As the ice sheets melted they moulded the sediments into the classic hills, the shapes of which tell of the direction of the ice flow.

The Irish Geological Heritage (IGH) Programme, coordinated by the Geological Survey of Ireland, is identifying and selecting the very best national sites for Natural Heritage Area (NHA) designation, to represent the country's geology. It is also identifying many sites of national or local geological heritage importance, which will be classed as County Geological Sites (CGS).

Sites of national or local geological importance have yet to be identified in County Monaghan. County Geological Sites are the optimal way of addressing the responsibility of Monaghan County Council under the Planning and Development Act 2000 to protect sites of geological interest.

It is important to note however, that management issues for the majority of geological heritage sites may differ from ecological sites and in some cases development may facilitate enhanced geological understanding of a site by exposing more rock sections—for example, in a quarry extension or road developments.



*Lisnadarragh Wedge Tomb, a type of megalithic tomb. Wedge tombs were built between the Irish late Neolithic and middle Bronze Ages (about 2500 to 2000BC). Both cremation and unburnt human remains were deposited in the Wedge tombs although cremation was more common.*

## LANDSCAPE

The most recent period of geological history is the quaternary, beginning approximately 1.6 million years ago and continuing to today. When the ice sheets were retreating during the most recent ice age, 10,000 years ago, unsorted mixtures of sediment, stones and boulders were deposited in mounds forming the drumlins we know and love. In the context of landscape character, these glacial landforms are essentially fossil. Once damaged or destroyed, they cannot be replaced since the processes that created them no longer exist.

In general, the sediments deposited were heavy clays, leading to impeded drainage. The hilly topography together with the soil types has resulted in the creation of inter-drumlin lakes, fens and wetlands, another key characteristic of Monaghan's landscape.

With the improvements in climatic conditions around 8,500 BC, glacial sheets retreated, and early vegetation began to pioneer across the glaciated landscape. Pine forests grew upon the higher ground and elm and hazel developed in the lowlands. The climatic deterioration in the latter half of the second millennium and the impacts of farming are believed to have been partially responsible for the development and spread of blanket bog. Sliabh Beagh is Monaghan's largest area of blanket bog,

A County Monaghan Landscape Character Assessment has been undertaken by Monaghan County Council. The objective of the study was to complete a thorough assessment of the character of Monaghan's landscapes in order to provide the basis for policy formulation and informed decision-making regarding landscape management in the County.

*Orchid rich meadow, Clontibret, No artificial fertilisers are applied and the sward is cut after the plants go to seed creating this beautiful habitat for butterflies, moths and other invertebrates.*



Monaghan contains a variety of landscape types. The high upland landscapes include the mountain moorland that is associated with Sliabh Beagh. This supports peatland habitats and a range of water waterbodies and small streams. Other upland landscapes include the farmland associated with Mullyash Mountain on the eastern County boundary and a number of isolated rocky outcrops in the southern part of the County.

A central low lying chain of lakes extends across the width of the County from Rockcorry to Castleblayney. This lakeland farmland features pastoral land uses and important wetland habitats around the lakes which are fringed with reeds and riparian vegetation.

To the north and the south of the lakeland, upland drumlin farmland becomes the dominant landform and use. These elevated farmland landscapes rise above low lying farmland and generally extend in an east west direction across the county.

County Monaghan contains some extensive river systems. The principal ones include the River Blackwater which is located to the north east and follows broadly along the line of the County boundary. Further south, the River Finn extends from Smithborough to Clones and ultimately links into the large Lough Erne lakeland system in the neighbouring County of Fermanagh.

Monaghan is a landlocked county, bounded by a number of counties including Tyrone, Fermanagh, Armagh, Cavan Meath and Louth. Some of the landscape features already mentioned form natural boundaries, for example, the River Blackwater which divides Monaghan from Armagh to the north east. Others, for example, the upland peatlands of the north west represent habitat types or indeed landscape types that extend across adjacent Counties as is the case with Sliabh Beagh, located in both Counties Monaghan and Tyrone.



## NATURAL HERITAGE

County Monaghan has a rich natural heritage, particularly in relation to its wide range of natural and semi-natural habitats including wetland, woodland, hedgerow, lake, river and upland habitats that support a wide range of plant and animal species. These areas are in the main extremely sensitive and are susceptible to any change that affects the ecological balance.

As well as its intrinsic value, Monaghan's natural heritage or biodiversity provides services to the people of Monaghan, by providing water filtration (through wetlands), buffering of floods (floodplains along rivers, and wetlands acting as sponges and stores), soil fertility, and resources for angling and tourism. It also contributes to our landscape character.

The Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2000 are the principle statutory provision providing for the protection of wildlife (both flora and fauna) and the control of activities that may impact adversely on the conservation of wildlife. One of the important features of the 2000 Act was the introduction of a mechanism for statutory protection of Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), which embrace a wider range of habitats and species than are covered by the European Habitats Directive and the European Birds Directive. In Co Monaghan there are 75 proposed Natural Heritage Areas comprising mainly of wetland habitats, lakes, rivers, marshes, fens, bogs and woodland. These are recognised by Monaghan County Council as important conservation areas, and are included in the County Development Plan.

The largest site in Monaghan is Eshbrack bog on Slieve Beagh, and known to many as Bragan, and the main habitat there is blanket bog. This site has recently been designated as a Natural Heritage Area, which provides it with full legal protection, against any adverse impacts. It is also been considered as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for birds because of the population of Hen Harriers that occur there. It is also important for the Greenland White-fronted goose which use it as a wintering ground, and for the Red Grouse, one of our native game species. Curlew, snipe, golden plover and the buzzard is a common sight hunting over the moor.

Kilrooskey Lough, just north of Clones is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the Habitats Directive solely for the protection of the White-clawed Crayfish, an invertebrate species, whose survival relies on unpolluted water. The quality of the water in Co Monaghan does pose a challenge to all concerned. It should be recognised that water is a habitat in its own right for a lot of species.

Monaghan is one of Ireland's premier angling locations and this is reflected in its reputation for coarse and pike fishing, its fine game angling river stretches and its wild brown trout populations. The fisheries of County Monaghan comprise of many major river systems and their associated lakes.

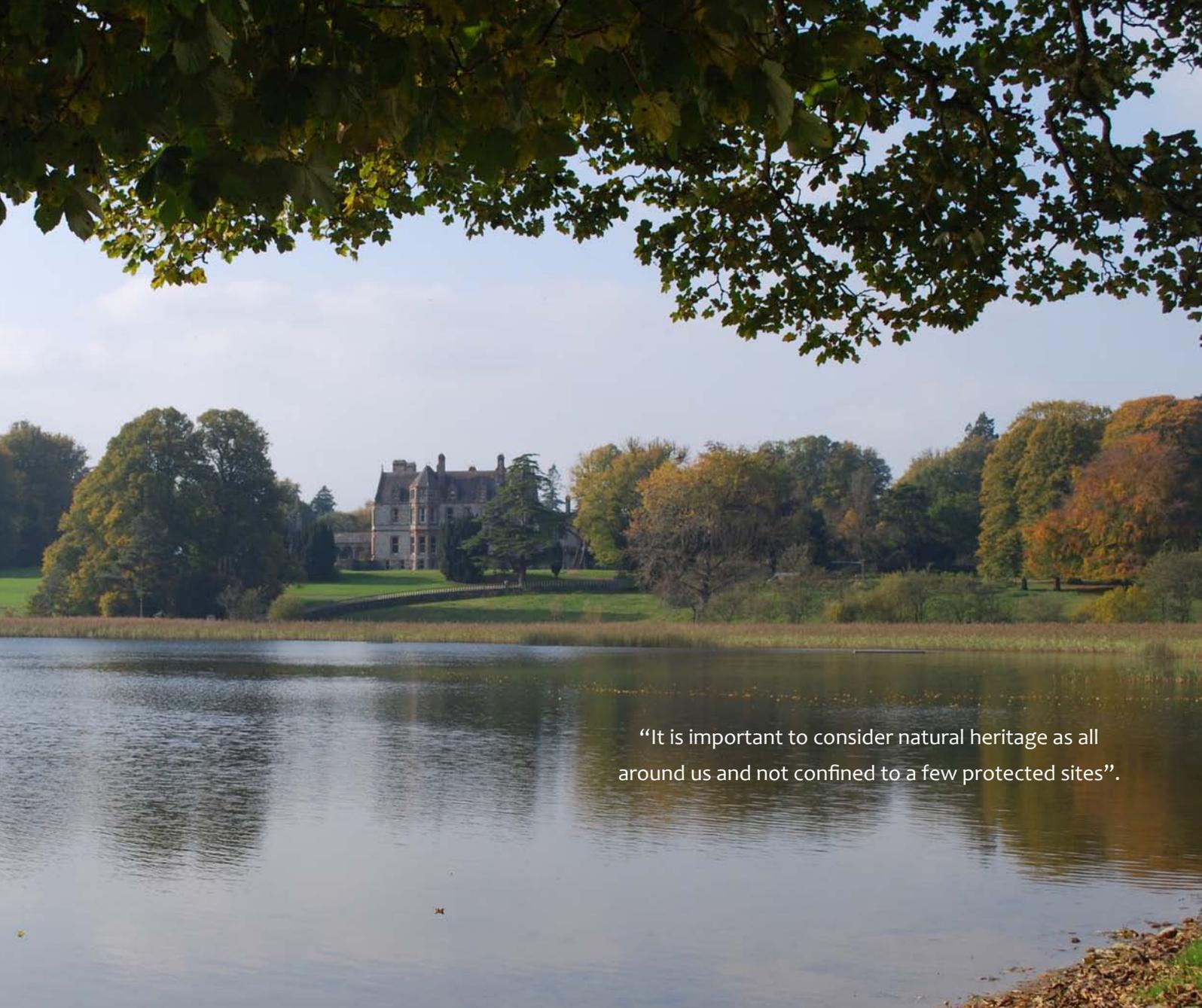
The Erne catchment, comprising the Dromore River, the Finn River and the Bunnoe River systems dominate the north of the county. To the east lies the Blackwater system and to the south, the Fane and Glyde system can be found. The Ulster Blackwater and its tributaries the Monaghan Blackwater and Mountain Water Rivers contain good stocks of Brown Trout. It is also worth noting that these rivers also contain native white clawed crayfish, an internationally protected species. The Rivers Fane and Glyde contain Brown Trout and Salmon in County Monaghan. Both rivers also have good numbers of Sea Trout in their lower reaches in County Louth. The Bragan Mountain lakes, Lough More and Lough Emy contain good numbers of Brown Trout. The lamprey, a species dating back to our glacial past is also present in many lakes and rivers. This is also an internationally important and protected species. Most lakes and rivers have good stocks of bream, roach, rudd, perch and pike. Eels are present in all waters in the county.

Like all freshwater surface water in Ireland, Monaghan's lakes and rivers are under threat from multiple sources – agricultural and industrial pollution continues to play a huge part in the continuing deterioration of water quality in the county. Loss of vital wetland habitat and increased pressure from construction developments are also critical factors.

Monaghan has a rich network of natural heritage sites including rivers, wetlands, woodlands, lakes, and bogs which support a diversity of habitat types and provide homes and niches for many wildlife species. It is important to consider natural heritage as all around us and not confined to a few protected sites. In order to remain healthy, nature needs to be treated sensitively and considered in land use decisions both within and outside "nature sites". This is because nature operates within a connected system. Lakes can be connected to each other or to wetlands via groundwater or surface streams. Woodland sites may depend on connections and corridors linked through hedgerows.

*Marsh fritillary butterfly (Fritileán Réisc), the only butterfly protected by European legislation is found in Co. Monaghan. Its caterpillars feed on Devil's Bit Scabious only.*





“It is important to consider natural heritage as all around us and not confined to a few protected sites”.

*Castle Leslie, Glaslough looking over the lake, which is a Natural Heritage Area.*

## **RIVERS AND LAKES**

The Erne catchment, comprising the Dromore River, the Finn River and the Bunnoe River systems dominate the west of the county. The Blackwater River system is in the north of the county and to the south are the Fane and Glyde river catchments. The Ulster Blackwater and its tributaries, the Monaghan Blackwater and Mountain Water Rivers, contain good stocks of Brown Trout. These rivers also contain native White-clawed Crayfish, an internationally protected species. The Monaghan Blackwater contains important spawning habitat for Dollaghan Trout, a strain of trout unique to Lough Neagh. The Rivers Fane and Glyde contain Brown Trout and Salmon in County Monaghan. Salmon is an internationally important and protected species. The Bragan Mountain lakes, Lough More and Lough Emy contain good numbers of Brown Trout.

The lamprey, a species dating back to our glacial past is also present in many lakes and rivers. This is also an internationally important and protected species. Most lakes and rivers have good stocks of bream, roach, rudd, perch and pike. Eels are present in all waters in the county.

Ten turloughs have been identified and surveyed in the county in recent years. These habitats are of international importance. These ephemeral lakes have a close relationship with groundwater and the levels of the lakes fluctuate throughout the year and can disappear entirely during the Summer. As a result, they have very unusual plant communities and are very vulnerable to pollution.

## WETLANDS

County Monaghan contains a wide range of wetlands and their associated species, of high international and national importance. Due to the varying topography, hydrology, climate and soils present Monaghan has wetland habitats ranging from degraded cutover raised bogs, blanket bogs, fens, marshes, large riverine systems, an abundance and variety of lakes, springs, wet woodlands and many more. Monaghan contains some of the finest examples of transition mire fens and mesotrophic inter drumlin lakes that occur in Ireland.

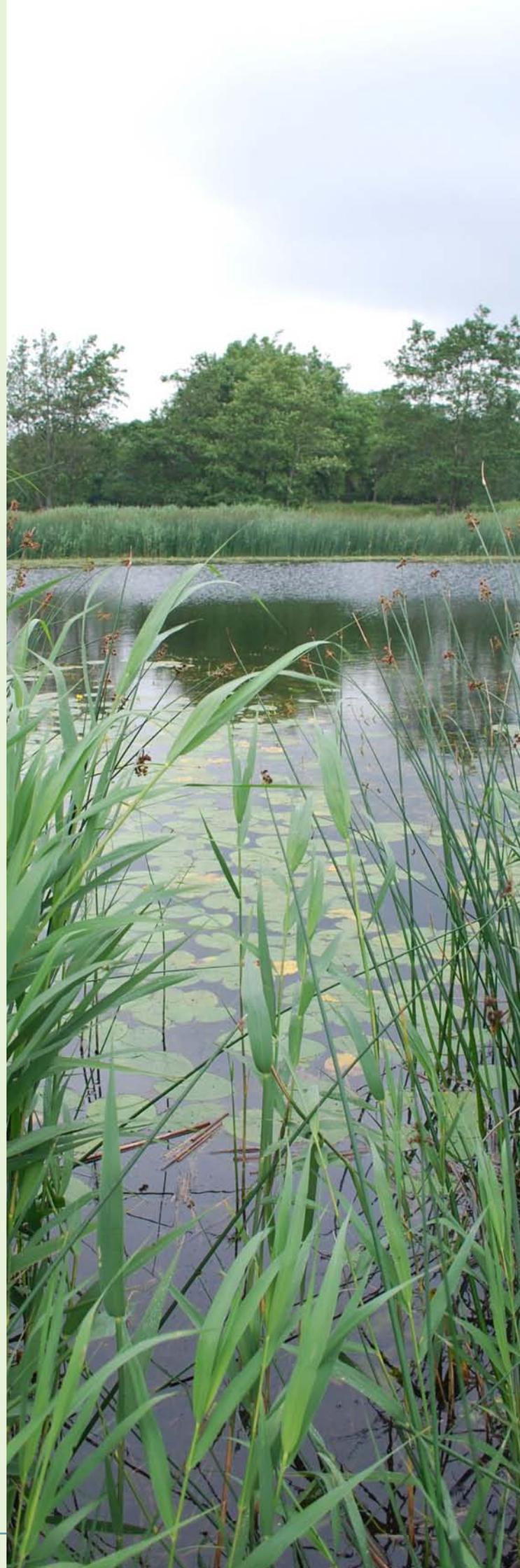
A wetland map for the county has been created by the Monaghan County Council Heritage Office. The total area of wetland habitat that has been mapped in county Monaghan is currently 7,319 ha, which represents 5.8 % of the entire county (this should be interpreted as a minimum area as wetland habitats within many sites were not mapped due to lack of baseline data).

Wetland functions include water filtration, flood buffering and habitat for wildlife. Wetlands therefore provide tremendous economic benefits, for example: water supply (quantity and quality); fisheries; agriculture, through the maintenance of water tables and nutrient retention in floodplains; timber and agricultural production; energy resources, such as peat and plant matter; wildlife resources; transport; and recreation and tourism opportunities. Peatlands are known to store 20-30% of the worlds' soil carbon, exceeding by three times the amounts stored in tropical rainforests.

In a recent report by the Biodiversity Unit of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DOEHLG 2008) the biodiversity value of wetlands in Ireland was estimated to be worth €385 million per year to the Irish economy. The recent report "Wetland Ecosystem Economics: evaluating the benefits derived from Monaghan's wetlands" undertaken for Monaghan County Council estimated the economic value of just six case study wetlands in the county, covering a variety of wetland types. The report estimated that over a 50 year period, the value of the wetlands ranged from €10,000 for the smallest site to €2.9 million for the largest of the six sites.

Unfortunately, to date, society has generally only realized the benefit of wetland services after they have disappeared or been seriously degraded. Problems with flooding, lost recreational opportunities, reduced fish populations and more costly water treatment are examples of costs understood only after a wetland ecosystem has been degraded or destroyed. The idea behind putting an economic value on some of these wetland benefits before ecosystem-altering decisions are made is to recognize these potential costs up front and thereby put wetland-related decisions on a more economically sound footing.

*Kilyboley Lake, with fringing reeds and floating lily pads.*



## HEDGEROWS

County Monaghan's hedgerow network is an asset to the county, being valuable in terms of agriculture, landscape, wild flora and fauna, water quality and carbon sequestration. The total length of hedgerow in County Monaghan is estimated at 12,845km, and the average figure for hedgerow density as 9.93 kilometres per square kilometre (km/km<sup>2</sup>). They often have associated banks, walls, ditches (drains), or trees.

A total of 35 shrub and tree species, including 27 native species, were recorded in the Monaghan Hedgerow Survey, undertaken in 2010. Hawthorn (Whitethorn) is the most frequently occurring shrub species found in 95% of hedges. 72% of hedgerows sampled were comprised solely of native species. Ash is the most common tree species, occurring in 68% of hedges in tree form. The Monaghan Hedgerow survey indicates that townland boundary hedgerows usually have more species than ordinary field hedges.

Hedgerows are a valuable multi-functional resource in our countryside, benefiting agriculture, wildlife, the environment, tourism and the general community.

Research indicates greater establishment success where Hawthorn (Whitethorn) provenance is closely matched to the planting site.

“Only 1.72% of County Monaghan has native woodland cover”.



*The Primrose (Sabbaircín) is one of the first spring flowers to appear in our hedgerows and is a good indicator of ancient woodland.*

## WOODLANDS

Ireland is one of the least forested countries in Europe with about 9% of its area under forest cover, the majority of which is composed of commercial conifer plantations. Only 2% of the country is covered by native or semi-natural woodland, that is, woodland dominated by native tree species, and much of this is highly fragmented and modified. Only 1.72% of County Monaghan has native woodland cover. 43 woodlands were surveyed in Monaghan as part of the National Native Woodland Survey. One-quarter of the woodland sites are associated with lakes and one-quarter with drumlins. Monaghan does not have any woodlands (or indeed semi-natural habitats of any kind) designated as part of National Parks or Statutory Nature Reserves, despite the fact that there are many woodlands of high quality. Sixteen woodlands were ranked as high quality in the native woodland survey.



*Scarlet cup fungus, Lough Fea Woodland, Carrickmacross. This fungus grows on decaying sticks and branches on the forest floor.*

## CHAMPION TREES

These are the tallest, widest or oldest trees in the county and have been identified and measured by the Tree Council of Ireland. Eighty-one trees were included in the survey; most of these are on private land and generally associated with demesnes and parks. The widest (girth) tree in Monaghan is a Wellingtonia Giant Sequoia at Carrickmacross which is 7.52m wide and 37m tall. Next in line is a 7.2m x 16m high Common Oak tree at Dartry Church of Ireland, Rockcorry. A Swiss Stone Pine at Castle Leslie, Glaslough is the widest of its kind in Ireland and a Beech tree at Hilton Park, Clones is the tallest beech tree in Ireland at 39m tall.



*Oak tree with acorns, Castle Leslie Estate, Glaslough.*



*Lord Rossmore's Tree has been identified by the Tree Council of Ireland as a Heritage Tree. A modest obelisk recorded the planting of the Giant Redwood by Henry Cairnes Westenra, 4th Lord Rossmore, on his 11th birthday in 1862.*

## INVASIVE SPECIES

Invasive species are species that have been introduced, generally by human intervention, outside their natural range and whose establishment and spread can threaten native ecosystem structure, function and delivery of services. Once introduced, control, management and eradication where possible of invasive species can be very difficult and costly; therefore early detection and reactive measures are desirable.

Globally, invasive alien species are considered to be one of the most important direct drivers of biodiversity loss and ecosystem service changes. "Invasive" means that they are vigorous and good at spreading. "Alien" means that they are non-native. At present in Ireland, several of our priority habitats are in 'unfavourable conservation status' due to the presence of a non-native species. Examples of species threatened by invasive alien species include the Red Squirrel and White Clawed Crayfish, for which Ireland holds Europe's stronghold population.

A black list of unwanted species is set out in the 2011 Natural Habitat Regulations. It is an offence to release or allow to escape, to breed, propagate, import, transport, sell or advertise such species. Transitional provisions will allow a reasonable period for people holding such animals or plants to dispose of them appropriately.

A report on the Dirty Dozen Invasive Species in County Monaghan was compiled by the National Biodiversity Data Centre in 2010, based on available information. The report provides information on recorded sightings on the following species: Japanese Knotweed, Himalyan Balsam, Giant Hogweed, Rhododendron, Least Duckweed, Grey Squirrel, Gammarus pulex, Zebra mussel, New Zealand Flatworm, Nuttall's Waterweed. Some of these species can have severe impacts on human health such as Giant Hogweed or have devastating impacts on built structures such as Japanese Knotweed. All of these species are included on the black list – the third schedule of the 2011 Natural Habitat Regulations that lists the non-native species which are subject to restrictions.



*Indian Balsam is an invasive alien species which means that it is not native to Ireland. It is pictured here at Rossmore Park, Monaghan.*

## CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

The word *biodiversity* is the coming together of two words biological diversity. It became commonly used during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) at Rio de Janeiro in 1992, also known as the 'Earth Summit'.

The Earth Summit recognised that biodiversity is about more than plants, animals and their habitats. It is also about people and our need for medicines, food, clean water, fresh air, shelter and a healthy environment to live in. We rely on a healthy biodiversity. Biodiversity is now widely considered to be a "key test" of sustainable development, meaning that the conservation of biodiversity is an integral part of meeting sustainable development objectives.

After the Earth Summit, nations were encouraged to develop national strategies, plans or programmes for the conservation or sustainable use of biological diversity or adapt existing strategies plans or programmes for this purpose.

Ireland produced its first National Biodiversity Plan in April 2002. The second plan was published in November 2011. The Plan sets out a range of actions for the promotion and delivery of biodiversity conservation at both national and local levels. Included in the Plan are specific actions for local authorities including:

- Each Local Authority to prepare a local biodiversity plan or review existing plans;
- Each Local Authority to designate a suitably qualified officer for natural heritage conservation matters in its area.

The Plan also emphasizes the important role of Local Authorities in promoting and delivering biodiversity conservation through local plans and programmes.

## THE MONAGHAN BIODIVERSITY

This Biodiversity Action Plan aims to provide a targeted and coordinated approach to biodiversity conservation in the county, coordinated by the Monaghan County Council Heritage Office. It turns the aims and agreements of the 1992 Earth Summit to action at a local level. The Monaghan Biodiversity Action Plan is a continuing process that sets out biodiversity priorities for the county, works to achieve them, monitors success and reassesses the need for action.



Bog cotton, on Sliabh Beagh Blanket Bog, Bragan,

## LEGISLATION

### SITES OF EUROPEAN IMPORTANCE

Sites of European nature importance include Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs).

### SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS

Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are areas designated specifically for bird species under the 1979 EU Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds, otherwise known as the Birds Directive. Ireland is obliged to designate any site that meets the Directive's set of ecological criteria. The network of SPAs in Ireland includes important wintering waterfowl sites and sites supporting rare bird species such as the Corncrake and the Hen Harrier.

The largest single wetland site in county Monaghan is Eshbrack bog on Sliabh Beagh, and known to many as Bragan. This site, in the main blanket bog, has recently been designated as a Natural Heritage Area (NHA), which provides it with full legal protection, against any adverse impacts. It is also a Special Protection Area (SPA) for birds because of the important population of the Hen Harriers occurring there. It is also important for Greenland White-fronted geese which use it as a wintering ground, and for Red Grouse, one of our native game species. Other species associated with the area include curlew, snipe and golden plover while buzzard is often seen hunting over the bogland. A conservation management plan for Sliabh Beagh was published in 2011.



*Sliabh Beagh is a wonderful place to engage with nature and the outdoors.*



*The White Clawed Crayfish (Gliomach Fionnuisce) is the only native crayfish species found in Ireland, and is a protected species. It is found in a number of sites in the county including Kilroosky Lough close to Clones.*

### SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are areas that are of European Importance for habitats, plants and animals other than birds. These are designated under the 1992 EU Habitats Directive. These sites are selected according to a specific set of criteria relating to habitats and species that are particularly important, rare or vulnerable in Europe. Habitats listed for protection include turloughs, fens, bogs, some lake types, species rich grasslands and sand dune systems. Animals listed for protection by the designation of SACs include the otter, salmon, marsh fritillary butterfly, fresh water pearl mussel and whorl snails.

Kilroosky Lough, just north of Clones is to date the only Special Area of Conservation (SAC) designated in county Monaghan under the Habitats Directive. This international conservation designation aims to protect the habitat of White-clawed Crayfish, a freshwater invertebrate species, whose survival relies on unpolluted water. Excellent examples of calcareous fens and lakes which are home to a variety of scarce plants and animals are also protected within this site.

### NATURA 2000 SITES

Together, SPAs and SACs make up a European network of sites known as the Natura 2000 network. They are protected in Irish legislation through the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997 and 2011. These regulations lay out rigorous tests that are designed to ensure that SACs and SPAs are not negatively impacted on by any proposals. Monaghan County Council is obliged to exercise its functions, including consent functions in compliance with the requirements of the Birds and Habitats Directives and with the 2011 Regulations.



*St. Peter's Church in Laragh, built on a rock and constructed from cast iron is a real gem of late nineteenth century heritage.*



*Courthouse, Monaghan, designed by Joseph Welland 1829. One of the defining features of the courthouse is the façade of Doric columns and the use of large sandstone blocks taken from a local quarry at Esbnaglogh. The courthouse was refurbished by the OPW in 2011.*

The legislative framework in Ireland which is enshrined in the Planning and Development Regulations 2000-2002 provides for a high level of protection of our architectural and archaeological Heritage. It also recognises the social and economic importance of conserving our built heritage, and implicit in this is the role of the conservation of our built heritage in delivering the objectives of sustainable development .

Sympathetic maintenance, modification and re-use of protected structures can result in aesthetic, economic and environmental benefits and allow the building to be re-used in a modern way. The successful conservation and re-use of such structures requires a creative and sensitive approach on behalf of local authorities, policy makers, stakeholder agencies, owner occupiers and developers. It also requires a balance between conserving a building's innate character and finding an appropriate use to ensure its continued survival.

The principle means for protecting the architectural heritage is through the inclusion of buildings on the Record of Protected Structures. This provides positive recognition of structures of importance and gives a very high degree of protection. The owners of Protected Structures can also avail of a Conservation Grants Scheme for the maintenance and improvement of their structures. The identification of buildings and structures for inclusion on the record will be based on the criteria set out in the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Architectural Heritage Protection (DoEHLG 2004).

Currently there are 648 Protected Structures on the five Registers of Protected Structures in County Monaghan including the four Town Council areas of Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney and Clones.

An Architectural Conservation Area is a place, area, group of structures or townscape, which is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or contributes to the appreciation of a protected structure. An Architectural Conservation Area may or may not include Protected Structures. To date no ACAs have been identified for Monaghan.

*The gothic revival interior of St. Macartan's Roman Catholic Cathedral, Monaghan town, designed by JJ McCarthy.*



*Clones Market House, viewed here in September 2011 during the National Famine Commemoration.*

## ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

Architectural Heritage includes all structures, buildings and groups of buildings including streetscapes and urban vistas which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest together with their setting, grounds, fixtures, fittings and contents.

County Monaghan has a rich architectural heritage of civic buildings, churches, country houses, demenses, round towers and vernacular buildings. In addition there are buildings which point to our industrial heritage; flax and corn mills and road and rail bridges.

The preservation of the architectural heritage has always been given a high priority, however in recent times recognition of its importance has prompted a significant shift at national and local level towards a more active approach towards ensuring the future of historic buildings.





*Two of the supporting cast iron columns for a viaduct for the Victorian Great Northern Railway.*

## **INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE**

Industrial heritage relates to sites, structures, machinery and artefacts associated with our industrial past. Examples of industrial heritage in Monaghan are the remains of the Great Northern Railway routes and structures, and the Ulster Canal which traversed the county from Clones to Tyholland. Other examples are the mills of the county, relating to the Ulster Linen industry and corn and spade mills. A number of industrial heritage surveys have been undertaken by Monaghan County Council Heritage Office as part of the Monaghan Heritage Plan.

## **MILLS**

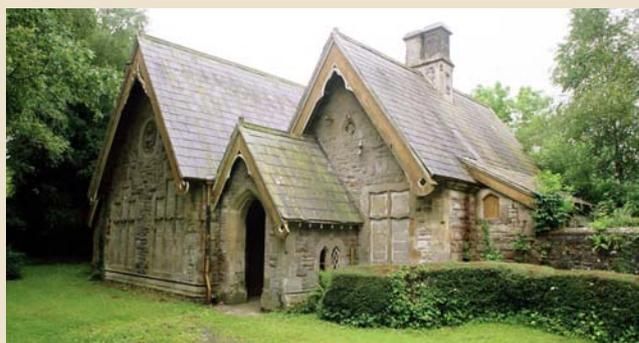
The survey of mills found that there are at least 192 mill sites, consisting of large mill complexes or small local corn mills in the county. Many sites incorporated associated buildings and structures such as drying kilns and chimneys and houses. Of the 192 sites considered, 25 sites have been evaluated as being of local heritage significance, and 31 mills are assessed as being of regional importance.

“The preservation of architectural heritage has always been given a high priority . . .”

## **GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY**

The infrastructure of the railways was built to the highest standards, extolling fine architecture and using good quality materials. A railway legacy of built heritage is dotted throughout County Monaghan, contributing to the character of our landscape and townscapes. The old routes of the lines still connect places, and many are now important wildlife corridors.

There were 17 stops and 15 railway stations (10 of which are still standing) in County Monaghan. Structures including railway bridges (cut stone, brick, concrete, iron, access bridges), viaducts, signal boxes, goods-sheds, stations, stationmasters' houses, workers' cottages, platforms still stand marking the route of the railway, in addition to some original furniture such as lamps and gates.



*Former GNR railway station for Glaslough village.*



*A section of the gloriously colourful stained glass windows from Christ Church, Aughnamullen, Ematrix Parish, designed by William Henry O'Connor London, 1864.*

## CHURCHES

There are over 110 post-1700 churches in County Monaghan, reflecting many religious denominations but mainly Roman Catholic, Church of Ireland and Presbyterian. Most of the churches are included on the Record of Protected Structures and are therefore protected. Many of the churches face challenging economic futures as the number attending them decrease, and the cost of the conservation of their often ornate and high quality exteriors and interiors falls onto smaller congregations. The Heritage Office undertook a survey of all churches in the county in 2010.

## ESTATES AND DEMESNES

Other important features of Monaghan's built heritage are the estate houses, gate lodges, farm buildings and designed landscapes found throughout the county. Many of these estates remain in the original family ownership such as Hilton Park, Clones, Lough Fea House, Carrickmacross and Castle Leslie, Glaslough. Others are in public ownership such as Rossmore Park, Monaghan and Blayney Castle (Lough Muckno) in Castleblayney. Even where the main house is no longer standing, remnants of these estates remain such as walled gardens, gate lodges, mausoleums, designed views and vistas. These are part of the character and add to the amenity of these sites, many of which are publicly accessible.

## VERNACULAR HERITAGE

Unlike the estate or large country houses, traditional houses were built without architects' drawings and were constructed economically with local and easily accessible materials. For example, in the Dromore River catchment, many houses are built using traditional mud wall construction. Other traditional features include jamb walls, porches, thatch, forged gates, and neat compositions of farmhouse and outbuildings.



*Traditional wrought iron field gate from South Monaghan, made locally in a blacksmiths forge.*

## INLAND WATERWAYS



*A section of the Ulster Canal close to Clones.*

The Ulster Canal was constructed by the Ulster Canal Company between 1831 and 1841 to link Lough Neagh with Upper Lough Erne, and was the last significant Irish Canal to be built. It was never a great commercial success, being built as an employment scheme, rather than to meet a commercial need and due to the narrow gauge of the channel.

Starting at Charlemont, on the River Blackwater in Co Armagh, it passes Caledon, Middletown, Monaghan and Clones en route to Wattle Bridge on a navigable section of the River Finn some 6km from the Erne. Its overall length is 74km (46 miles). Just over 35km (22 miles) lies within Co Monaghan, representing 48% of its total length. The canal finally opened to commercial traffic in 1842. In all, it had cost £230,000, of which just over half (£120,000) was a government loan.

It is only in the last quarter of the 20th century, fifty years after being abandoned in the 1930's that the growth in leisure boating has created a serious demand for the canal as a working navigation.

Since 1999, responsibility for Ireland's inland waterways, both north and south, has been in the hands of Waterways Ireland. Detailed feasibility studies have since been carried out and the Inland Waterways Association of Ireland has also been proactive in informing politicians and the general public of the social and economic benefits of the reopening of the Ulster Canal. These endeavours cumulated in the announcement at a North-South Ministerial Council Meeting in July 2007 that the Clones-Erne section of the canal would be restored.

The Canal infrastructure comprises bridges, warehouses, locks and lock keepers cottages, as well as the water channel. A very high proportion of these buildings are still in-situ, if usually in a ruinous state. Those structures which have been restored focus attention of what full restoration of all the structures will add to the heritage of the area. In 2007, an industrial heritage survey of the Ulster Canal was undertaken for the Monaghan County Council Heritage Office. This survey recorded all the structures associated with the Ulster Canal in the county and assessed the canal for its intactness.

Waterways Ireland has been assigned responsibility for the design and implementation of the scheme. Waterways Ireland will also be responsible for maintaining the restored canal and for its development, primarily for recreational use. Full restoration is the target for much local and national public opinion. It is felt that full restoration must eventually happen, and that the value to heritage, tourism, and the general economy in the border areas will be inestimably improved.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE

County Monaghan also has a wealth of sites and monuments of archaeological importance. These sites are an important finite component of Monaghan's heritage, culture and landscape.

Archaeology is the material remains left by past societies and provides evidence of the environment they inhabited. Archaeology gives the present generation an insight into the way of life, traditions and culture of our ancestors. The archaeological resource consists of material remains in the form of sites and monuments, artefacts and environmental evidence. Monaghan has a wealth of remains including; round towers, burial sites, ringforts, enclosures, souterrains, crannogs, crosses and cairns. The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) indicates the location of all known recorded archaeological monuments throughout the county, these are available for inspection in the Planning Office and county library. The RMP also includes Zones of Archaeological Potential (ZAPs), which indicates areas of extensive archaeological remains over a given area.

Monaghan County is richly endowed with sites and monuments of archaeological importance with the strongest concentration in the south and west of the county. These sites are an important finite component of Monaghan's heritage, culture and landscape and range from substantial monuments to fragile traces of human activity and settlement.

The main threat to our archaeological heritage in recent years has been the growth in the number of large scale developments such as quarrying, road building, industrial development and afforestation as a result of the success of the Irish economy. These types of development have posed a new threat to rural archaeology. It is therefore vitally important that the archaeological heritage be protected, particularly at a time of increasing development.

Monaghan was not officially formed into a county until 1585. The modern county is divided into five baronies; Truagh, Dartree, Monaghan, Cremourne and Farney. The baronies are further sub-divided into parishes and townlands. The modern landholding system in Co. Monaghan reflects elements of the later medieval Gaelic territorial organisation as recorded in a number of early modern land-settlements from the turn of the 17th century. Before this period, older territories ebbed and flowed across the drumlin landscape and the archaeology of the county must be treated in the wider context of south Ulster and north Leinster. The distribution of monuments, sites and artefacts must be understood within the context of these changing social landscapes as well as in relation to the natural topography of the area.

Almost all of the 1,700 townland names in Monaghan are Gaelic Irish – reflecting, in most cases, aspects of the local landscape. The spellings of townland names which were written by the Ordnance Survey from the 1830s onwards are phonetically-rendered versions of the original Irish. Examples of some of the commonest names contain prefixes such as Drum-, Knock-, Mullagh/Mully- and Tullagh/Tully- which refer to the hills of the region; or Cor-, Killy-, Der/Derry-, Cool/Cul-, which refer to woodlands. Some common names refer to the human/settlement landscape as in Lis-, or Ra/ Rath-, Gort-, Tatty-, Bally-, Cross-. The colonial /plantation names are less common, though they are an important part of the social history of the landscape. Some of the town and village names, for instance, reflect settler origins such as – Castleblayney, Emyvale, Scotstown, Scotshouse, Newbliss, Rockcorry and Smithborough.

*The summit of Mullyash Cairn looking towards County Armagh.*



A large, weathered stone monument stands in a lush green field. The stone is covered in thick green moss and patches of yellow and blue lichen. It has a rough, textured surface and a pointed top. The background is a vibrant green field with some small blue flowers scattered throughout. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day.

“Archaeology gives the present generation  
an insight into the way of life, traditions and  
culture of our ancestors”.

## VALETTA CONVENTION

The aim of the Valetta Convention emphasises the scientific importance of archaeological heritage. In years gone by, archaeological sites and monuments were mined for objects to be placed in museums and art galleries. This happened in Monaghan, particularly in the nineteenth century when collectors dug crannogs and forts searching for objects for their private collections. This type of digging destroys the context of the find, and other archaeological material. The aim of the Convention is consistent with the Charter for the Protection and Management of the Archaeological Heritage produced by the International Council of Monuments and Sites (referred to as the "Icomos Charter"), which states that "archaeological knowledge is based principally on the scientific investigation of the archaeological heritage" and that excavation is a last resort in the search for that information. By the use of scientific techniques, both destructive and non-destructive, heritage can be used to provide information on the evolution of mankind in Europe, to serve "as a source of the European collective memory".

## NATIONAL MONUMENTS LEGISLATION

The State archaeological service is provided by the Department of the Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and delivered through, the National Monuments Service and the National Museum of Ireland (Irish Antiquities Division) on behalf of the Minister.

All archaeology is protected by law. The National Monuments Acts 1930 to 2004 protect known, newly discovered or yet to be discovered archaeology. Any changes to national monument legislation during the lifetime of the plan will take precedence over what is described in this document. The main objectives of the new National Monuments Bill (likely to come be enacted during the lifetime of this plan) includes the provision of a consolidated and updated code to replace the existing National Monuments Acts 1930 to 2004.

It is an offence under the National Monuments Acts to dig or excavate anywhere for the purpose of uncovering archaeological features without or otherwise than in accordance with a licence issued by the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

*Drumirril Rock Art site south of Imiskeen dates from the Neolithic to the early Bronze Age. The defining characteristic of rock art is that it is placed on natural rock surfaces. The motifs on the Drumirril panels were formed by pecking with another stone, and were likely to be created as part of rituals and ceremonies.*

## RECORD OF MONUMENTS AND PLACES

Established by section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 2004, the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) is a statutory inventory of all known archaeological sites and areas, with accompanying maps on which sites and monuments are identified and numbered. The marker for each monument or site is generally circular in shape. However, some site markers indicate a major archaeological complex rather than an individual site and are delineated by a large shape or polygon that outlines a large area such as Drumirril bronze age Rock Art site, or sections of the iron age Black Pigs Dyke. It should also be remembered that every archaeological site has a landscape setting which may be important to consider in any application for development in proximity to a monument.

The RMP maps are available on a county by county basis and the entries on the RMP are known as Recorded Monuments. There are over 1350 Recorded Monuments in County Monaghan. The Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht must be given two months notice in writing of any works to or in close proximity to a recorded archaeological monument. An archaeological licence is required for any archaeological excavations or investigations. This can be applied for through the National Monuments Service.

The RMP also includes areas of archaeological potential or zones of archaeological potential which indicate extensive archaeological remains over a large area. Monaghan town has a large area of archaeological potential at its core for example.



*Donagh Old Graveyard, close to Glaslough hosts a collection of inscribed stones and memorials, including remnants of a high cross. This praying figure is decorating the side of one of the old headstones.*

## NATIONAL MONUMENTS (WWW.ARCHAEOLOGY.IE)

Some monuments on the RMP are considered to be of national importance due to their historical, architectural, traditional, artistic or archaeological interest and must be preserved. These are known as National Monuments. A detailed procedure must be followed in order to get Ministerial Consent for any proposed works to these monuments. The National Monuments Service of the Department of the Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht will advise on the protection applying to any particular monument under the National Monuments Acts and should be consulted if there is any doubt as to the status of the site.

## NATIONAL MONUMENTS IN STATE CARE

NATIONAL MONUMENT	MONUMENT NAME	DESCRIPTION	TOWNLAND
111	Clones Round Tower	Round Tower	Crossmoyle, Clones
112	Clones High Cross	High Cross	Crossmoyle, Clones
111	Wee abbey, clones	Church	Crossmoyle, Clones
382	Mannan Castle	Motte & Bailey	Donaghmoyne
208	Inishkeen Glebe Round Tower	Round Tower	Inniskeen
564	Mullyash	Cairn	Mullyash, Tavanaskea
367	Cairnbaine	Court Tomb	Tiredigan

## NATIONAL MONUMENTS SUBJECT TO PRESERVATION ORDERS

PO NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	TOWNLAND	SMR / RMP
4/1990	Black Pigs Dyke	Annagheane	MO016-012
7/1984	Ringfort	Dooroa (Creamore By.)	MO027-006
1/1982	Crannog	Loughoony	MO012-006
74/1939	Miskish More Stone	Miskish More	MO029-013
3/1987	Ringfort	Ture	MO017-030

Some archaeological sites or monuments may also have architectural merit and may be also listed on the Record of Protected Structures. This means that the monument is protected under the National Monuments Acts and the Planning and Development Act 2000.

Monaghan County Council has undertaken a number of projects through the County Heritage Plan relating to the archaeological resource of the county. These projects include an archaeological audit undertaken in 2006 which looked at surviving megalithic tombs in the county and their management and condition. Megalithic tombs are the iconic image of archaeology with which the public are most familiar, but these represent only a small proportion of the resource.



*Tedavnet Old Graveyard, the site of the original ecclesiastical settlement of St. Dambnait, contains very interesting South Ulster style headstones and a Bronze Age cup-marked stone.*

### **BURIAL GROUNDS AND GRAVEYARDS**

Many of the historic graveyards in County Monaghan are listed on the RMP as archaeological sites. Communities should clarify the status of their graveyard before they plan any works onsite. Conservation management plans are a useful tool for the conservation of historic graveyards and this approach is advocated, especially when masonry ruins are present onsite. Some of the older sites date from early Christian and pre-Christian times.

### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**

Archaeology also relates to landscape and three historic landscape character plans have been undertaken by Monaghan County Council for the towns of Clones, Ballybay and Castleblayney. These studies describe the development of these settlements over time, identify significant historic character areas and propose management strategies to make the most of the towns' historic assets.

### **UNRECORDED OR UNDISCOVERED ARCHAEOLOGY**

The archaeological inventories published in the 1980s are largely compiled from fieldwork based on monuments marked on the first edition Ordnance Survey maps and associated literature. It has become clear in the last decade that many archaeological monuments do not appear on the Record of Monuments and Places maps. Therefore, many archaeological sites and artefacts are yet to be discovered and recorded. This is because they may be below ground, difficult to identify or have remained unrecognised. Section 19 of the National Monuments Act 1994 provides for the reporting of newly discovered archaeological artefacts to the Director of the National Museum of Ireland.

Recent new archaeological discoveries in County Monaghan include the remains of a Neolithic house at Monanny, Carrickmacross, found during the construction of the N2. The Monanny House was dated to the Early Neolithic, making the site almost 6,000 years old. Pottery remains and grains of wheat and barley were found on the site. Although the site was excavated, recorded and subsequently built on, the archaeological investigations onsite provided important information on the types of dwellings and lifestyles of these people 6000 years ago.

“Conservation management plans are a useful tool for the conservation of historic graveyards”.



*Here at Killeevan Old Graveyard, the mortality symbols of the skull, crossed bones, coffin, hourglass and bell remind the living of the transience of their existence.*

## CULTURAL HERITAGE

Monaghan County Museum has been serving the people of Monaghan for over 30 years. It was the first local authority museum in Ireland. In this time, it has diversified to match the changing community needs of a changing community. The Museum has a professional commitment to excellence in caring for and displaying its' collection, a strength for which it has been frequently commended with awards such as the Council of Europe Museum Prize and the Museum of the Year Award for Best Collections Care (Commendation) in 2004.

## LANGUAGE

The English language was first introduced into Ireland at the time of the Norman invasion in the 12th century. English spread into Ulster during the 18th and 19th centuries from two directions, impacting on the dialects of the region. Along the border area, English was spread northwards from the Pale and southwards from central Ulster. Scots was a major factor in the development of English in Monaghan, but only fragments remain as the influences were not being continuously reinforced with contact with Scotland as happened in North-East Ulster. These Ulster-Scots fragments include the many descriptive words and phrases e.g. blether, brae, cowp, founder, howl yer wheest, still in use in Co. Monaghan.

The last remaining areas of Irish native speakers remained in Monaghan, Louth and Cavan to the mid-nineteenth century.

The Irish language has been revived in many areas, due to the many Gaelscoileanna in the region and also to organisations such as the Comhaltas as well as the efforts of individuals and families.

The Irish music tradition is very vibrant in Monaghan. There are many branches of Comhaltas Ceolteoirí Eireann throughout the county and Feile Oriol and Fiddler of Oriol competition have been revived recently.

## FARMING AND HERITAGE

The first evidence for farming in Ireland dates to around 4,000 BC during the Neolithic period. Then as now Monaghan was essentially a drumlin landscape, each drumlin embraced by a bog, river, stream or lake. The heavy clay glacial deposits defined what and where it could be achieved.

The county is dotted with relics of our agricultural past from the early court tombs, the hill top forts (the first farmyards) to the lime kilns, flax holes, linen mills of the eighteenth century the corn mills, and remnant dairies (15 in 1910), all of yester-year now fallen by the wayside. The enclosure of the countryside with ditches and hedges during the 19th century or the earlier medieval field boundaries still endure and are now important and necessary part of our Green Infrastructure.

Traditional farmsteads comprising one and two-storey farmhouses, byres, stables, forged gates, wells form are dotted throughout the countryside.

For millennia every one was either involved in farming or its protection. The culture and heritage we have today finds its birthplace on these early farms. With increased cultural sophistication, our farming ancestors left us a wonderful legacy of history from which we claim identity and that feeling we call home. It gives us great confidence to claim to have come from something very special and unique. Within every field boundary and monument there is the spirit of the forgotten generations.



*Enjoying the Artist Blacksmiths Forge In.*

*A member of the Irish Artist Blacksmiths Association demonstrates at the conservation workshop in Monaghan town.*



# ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE COUNTY MONAGHAN HERITAGE PLAN 2006 – 2011

## INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE

We created inventories and records for historic buildings and buildings of industrial heritage:

- *Industrial Heritage Survey of Mills,*
- *Architectural Survey in rural areas,*
- *Survey of Great Northern Railway,*
- *Industrial Heritage Survey of the Ulster Canal,*
- *Church inventory and guide to ecclesiastical architecture.*

We understand the issues affecting the conservation of archaeological monuments, and have created databases of all primary research sources:

- *Audit of Archaeological Monuments,*
- *Framework for Archaeological Research Monaghan phase 1;*
- *Framework for Archaeological Research phase 2.*

We collected information on many important nature sites and some wildlife species in the county:

- *Wetland Survey,*
- *Fen Surveys,*
- *Marsh fritillary butterfly distribution survey,*
- *Dragonfly survey,*
- *Dragonfly and water beetle survey,*
- *Hedgerow Survey.*

## EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

We promoted the importance of wetland habitats and wildlife to a wide audience:

- *Wonderful wetlands booklets and posters,*
- *Vote for your favourite wild thing campaign.*

We disseminated the findings of technical and scientific surveys to the general public:

- *HLC Clones exhibition,*
- *HLC Ballybay exhibition,*
- *GNR calendar,*
- *The Big Sketch in Clones workshops,*
- *Inscribed Histories: Burial Grounds, Archaeology and Folk Art conference,*
- *Inscribed Histories: Burial Grounds, Archaeology and Folk Art publication.*

## TRAINING AND BEST PRACTICE

We worked to promote best practice and high standards for conservation of our heritage:

- *Conservation Plans for two graveyards,*
- *Wise use of Wetlands Conference,*
- *Inscribed Histories Conference,*
- *Biodiversity training programme,*
- *Conservation of historic ironwork seminar at the Forge In.*



George Knight, Chair of the County Monaghan Heritage Forum explains the method of construction of Clones Round Tower.



Variable Blue damselfly, pictured at Grove Lough, Emyvale, a nationally important site for dragonflies and damselflies.

## ENJOYMENT OF OUR HERITAGE

We worked to ensure that heritage can be enjoyed by everyone:

- *Access to our heritage seminar,*
- *Heritage Week annual events,*
- *Biodiversity workshops.*

## HERITAGE AND CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE

We provided new heritage resources for young people and visited schools:

- *Vote for your favourite wild thing campaign,*
- *Wild Things at School book for primary school teachers,*
- *Wild Things at School worksheets for primary school students.*



Children from Gaelscoil Ultain, Monaghan launching the *Wild Things at School / Nitbe Fiáine ar Scoil* workbook with author Eanna Ni Lambna.

## PROTECTING AND MANAGING OUR HERITAGE

We studied our heritage assets in a holistic way to inform good planning:

- *Historic Landscape Characterisation Clones,*
- *Historic Landscape Characterisation Ballybay,*
- *Historic Landscape Characterisation Castleblayney.*

We took a strategic approach to promoting the protection of our natural heritage to policy and decision makers:

- *County Monaghan Biodiversity Action Plan,*
- *Ecosystem economics: Evaluation of the benefits derived from Monaghan's wetlands,*
- *Hedgerow Habitats Action Plan,*
- *Monaghan Wetland Map project.*



Three turloughs at Ballyloughan, south of Carrickmacross, shown here in Winter flood. These ephemeral lakes disappear through swallow holes into the limestone groundwater system. These are priority European Habitats.

## COUNTY MONAGHAN HERITAGE FORUM MEMBERS

AILISH KEANE	INLAND FISHERIES IRELAND
JUNE BROWN	CLOGHER HISTORICAL SOCIETY
CHARLEY McADAM	BORDER MINORITY GROUP
JOE SHANNON	BIRDWATCH IRELAND
DARINA KIERANS	PLANNING SECTION, MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL
JANE MCGORMAN	TEAGASC
KATHLEEN WARD	IFA
LIAM BRADLEY	MONAGHAN COUNTY MUSEUM, MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL
DYMPNA CONDRÁ	TOURISM OFFICER, MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL
AILEEN OWENS	ENVIRONMENT SECTION, MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL
DIARMUID RYAN	INLAND FISHERIES IRELAND
CLLR. JACKIE CROWE	ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE, MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL
CLLR. CIARA McPHILLIPS	ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE, MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL
CLLR. SEAMUS COYLE	ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE, MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL
CLLR. PAUDGE CONNOLLY	ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE, MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL
JOHN KEENAN	COMMUNITY FORUM REPRESENTATIVE
CATHERINE ELLIOT	MONAGHAN COUNTY LIBRARY, MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL
LARRY McDERMOTT	HISTORIAN, SOUTH MONAGHAN.
ETHNE McCORD	ST. MAUDAIN'S CHURCH, ERRIGAL TRUAGH.
NOEL CARNEY	DARTREY HERITAGE GROUP
MICHAEL HACKETT	NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE
GRACE MOLONEY	COMMUNITY FORUM REPRESENTATIVE
DERMOT CANTWELL	COILLTE
JOHN TOLAND	CAVAN-MONAGHAN LEADER
KIM McKENNA	COMMUNITY AND ENTERPRISE SECTION, MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL
SHIRLEY CLERKIN	HERITAGE OFFICER, MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL

## PROCESS: COUNTY MONAGHAN HERITAGE PLAN 2012 – 2017

Individuals and groups were invited to fill in a submission form or send in their own written submission on issues or actions to be considered for inclusion in the next County Monaghan Heritage Plan in writing or by email by Friday 25 November 2011.

Following the submissions period, the Draft Heritage Plan was presented to the Monaghan Heritage Forum on 1st December 2011 and Social, Cultural, Community and Voluntary Strategic Policy Committee meeting on the 17th January 2012.

The draft heritage plan was on public display for comment and submissions in January – February 2012.

A final plan was adopted by Monaghan County Heritage Forum on 17th May 2012 and by Monaghan County Council on 1st October 2012.

Written submissions were received from:

Robert Harrison  
Grace Moloney  
Dermot McCabe  
Charles Barter  
Dartrey Heritage Association  
Kilmore /Drumsnat Heritage Association  
Inland Fisheries Ireland  
Patrick Kavanagh Centre  
Clogher Historical Society  
Keep Ireland Open  
John McDonald  
Bernie Ruth  
Mary Kerley  
Bernie O'Hanrahan  
Josephine McKenna  
Emma Middleton  
Deirdre O'Brien  
Jerome Savage  
Catherine McKeown  
Noel Murphy  
Mrs G.S.Lunt

*St. Enda kneeling in front of an angel from the St. Fanchea and Enda window, one of the Harry Clarke Studio stained glass windows in St. Joseph's Church, Carrickmacross, dating from 1925.*







“If our heritage becomes part of our decision making, we will be able to preserve continuity to the past and we will make better decisions to ensure a sustainable future”.



An Chomhairle Oidhreachta  
The Heritage Council

