

Heritage Office
MONAGHAN
COUNTY COUNCIL

Monaghan Biodiversity & Heritage

Strategic Plan 2020 - 2025



An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council





**Foreword by
Monaghan
County Council
Cathaoirleach,
Cllr. Colm Carthy**

This new Biodiversity and Heritage strategic plan has sustainable values at its core, cognizant of the biodiversity and climate crisis and the need for quality, local environments. I welcome the strands focusing on language and our intangible heritage in the plan; the exploration of cultural heritage helps us understand our places better.

Custodians and volunteers who are involved with heritage across the county, contributing biodiversity records to national datasets, conserving historic buildings and landmarks, maintaining wildlife habitats and organising walks and talks are acting in the present for the future. They are real innovators and I thank them for their ongoing participation and work. The contribution that our heritage makes to sustainable livelihoods, neighbourhood quality, placemaking and a functioning healthy environment cannot be overstated.

I look forward to the implementation of this plan over the next five years, to engaging with its heritage themes and vision for the county and encouraging wide participation in the activities it promotes.



**Foreword by
Monaghan County
Council Chief
Executive,
Eamonn O'Sullivan**

It is with purpose and intent that the new strategic plan has set out its vision, themes and actions to ensure Monaghan plays our part in the conservation of our national heritage. The importance of our cultural and natural heritage for our identity, and sense of rootedness particularly during difficult times cannot be overstated. In tandem with its environmental role, through the ecosystem services and goods our biodiversity provides, and through the legacy of archaeological monuments and historic built environment of our towns and villages, heritage is an asset of immeasurable public good value.

It is right that the strategic plan has an ambition to embed a quality heritage service within Monaghan County Council so that these values can be better understood, protected and sustainably utilised in heritage led regeneration, sustainable tourism, habitat protection, carbon sequestration, nature friendly agriculture and as part of our landscape.

Monaghan County Council has been working in partnership with the Heritage Council since 2004, employing a Heritage Officer since that time to co-ordinate heritage activities across the county through the development and implementation of a County Heritage Plan, and County Biodiversity Plan. The County Monaghan Heritage Forum which supports and advises on the plan are a key part of the heritage infrastructure in the county and I thank them for their contribution.



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Structure of this strategic plan

This Biodiversity and Heritage Strategic Plan combines the areas of heritage and biodiversity into a strategic plan for County Monaghan. It contains thirteen priority themes for the county. These are aspects of heritage and biodiversity that are especially resonant or important for Monaghan. An action plan is an integral part of the strategy that will be undertaken over the next five years to enable positive outcomes for our biodiversity and heritage.

OUR MISSION

To protect, conserve and advocate for our biodiversity, tangible and intangible heritage, contributing to sustainable development and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

OUR VISION FOR BIODIVERSITY AND HERITAGE IN MONAGHAN

By 2025 the role of heritage and biodiversity for climate change mitigation and adaptation, sustainable communities, functioning ecosystems, health and well-being is generally accepted in the county and embedded in the activities of Monaghan County Council.



People enjoying a Dragonfly Workshop at the Ballybay Wetlands Centre in 2019



WHAT IS HERITAGE?

Natural (flora, fauna, landscapes, and ecology) and cultural - both tangible (such as buildings, monuments, waterways, books, works of art, and artefacts) and intangible (such as folklore, traditions, language, and knowledge) are part of the most recent international definitions of heritage.

Heritage is **“anything that we value collectively and want to hand onto the future”**.

The categories listed Ireland’s 1995 Heritage Act - buildings, monuments, archaeological objects, heritage objects, architectural heritage, flora, fauna, wildlife habitats, landscapes, seascapes, wrecks, geology, heritage gardens and parks, and inland waterways; refer to “tangible” heritage, a subset of the items listed as cultural heritage in the 1972 World Heritage Convention.

Eight years after the commencement of Ireland’s Heritage Act, UNESCO adopted the inclusion of intangible cultural heritage into the meaning of heritage.

President Michael D. Higgins noting the resultant descriptive gap in the Irish legislation, stated that heritage **“includes not only tangible heritage but also elements of our intangible living heritage such as songs, poems and language”** and highlighted the challenge since the legislations founding year to **“embrace a more inclusive agenda”** (Higgins, 2015).

The Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (The Faro Convention) defines **“cultural heritage as a group of resources inherited from the past which people identify, independently of ownership as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions. It includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time”**.

Monaghan County Council embraces this inclusive agenda in its understanding of heritage.



Peter Cassidy, blacksmith demonstrating traditional skills at Heritage Week event in Monaghan 2019

WHAT IS BIODIVERSITY?

Biodiversity is the variety of life on earth, in all its forms and interactions. It is both extremely complex and vital feature of our planet.

Biodiversity is comprised of several levels - genetic diversity, species diversity, communities of creatures and then ecosystem diversity such as woodlands or bogs where life interacts with the physical environment.

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) defines 'biological diversity' as "***The variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.***"

Biodiversity is our life-support system and it provides us with ecosystem goods and services, such as clean water, carbon sequestration, healthy soil, air quality, pollination, food and medicines, timber, and fibre for material. Biodiversity provides us with everything we need to survive.

Inniskeen Roundtower and church



Wetland fringe at Grove Lough, close to Emyvale



Ringlet butterfly at Tom Young's Wood, Monaghan



What we do

MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL

Monaghan County Council established a heritage office in 2005 as part of the Local Authority Heritage Officer programme, set up by the Heritage Council. The first County Monaghan Heritage Plan was published in 2006 and the first county Biodiversity Plan in 2008.

Each heritage site in the county is unique and has its own authentic values, inseparable from its place, its biodiversity and the cultural and societal values ascribed to it by people. A multiplicity of disciplines is required to work together to establish the full significance and value of every site, through the weaving together of cultural and natural values. In 2018, it was agreed by Monaghan County Council that a joint plan for biodiversity and heritage would make sense for effectiveness and delivery.

“Doing” heritage means acting for the future in the present, as a cultural anchor for future generations and as a component of sustainable development.

THE HERITAGE COUNCIL

The Heritage Council is a statutory body established under the Heritage Act 1995. Besides advising on Government Policy, the Heritage Council provides valuable professional, technical and financial support to the local authority. Monaghan County Council works in partnership with the Heritage Council to “promote interest,

education, knowledge, pride and care of our national heritage and supporting appreciation and enjoyment of our heritage.”

Building expertise and resources at local level has been a key objective of the Heritage Council since it was established. It is mandated with “**co-operating with public authorities, education bodies and others in the promotion of its functions.**” Management and responsibility of heritage at local level is often the best means to ensure its long-term care and sustainable use.

The Heritage Council established the Heritage Officer Programme in 1999. County Heritage Officers play a key role in promoting heritage awareness, developing policy and providing advice and information on local as well as national heritage issues. Monaghan County Council employs a County Heritage Officer as part of this initiative.

MONAGHAN COUNTY HERITAGE FORUM

The Monaghan County Heritage Forum is a multi-stakeholder group, drawn from the local authority elected representatives and staff, other agencies, non-governmental organisations, voluntary sector, and individual local experts. They advise on the development and implementation of the County Monaghan Biodiversity and Heritage Plan.



Vision for Monaghan County Council

Placing integrated heritage and biodiversity conservation at the forefront of sustainable development in County Monaghan, led by an active and responsive local authority.

OUR CORE VALUES

LEADERSHIP - Promoting and showing leadership in the heritage sector through the delivery of the strategic plan.

ADVOCACY - Demonstrate, using best available information and practices, how biodiversity and heritage should be treated as assets for current and future generations.

PARTNERSHIP - Collaborate with the Heritage Council, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and other government departments and agencies to achieve alignment with national policy direction.

INCLUSION - Involve a wide range of people in biodiversity and heritage.

ORGANISATION-WIDE FOCUS – HOW WE WILL GET THERE

- We shall establish a high-level, inter departmental group in the local authority to support delivery of the plan.
- We recognise that better management practices such as integrated conservation (projects led by multi-skilled professionals working with local communities), and valuing local distinctiveness are now at the core of sustainable development within heritage. We will put in place the right teams to deliver actions to impact positively on biodiversity and heritage.
- The Monaghan Heritage Forum will continue to advise on the preparation and development of the County Monaghan Biodiversity and Heritage Plan. Members are drawn from statutory and non-statutory agencies, elected representatives, community and voluntary representatives representing different heritage interests. The Forum will continue to meet at least four times per year.

Bog cotton on Sliabh Beagh blanket bog

Dawson Memorial obelisk, Monaghan, designed by W.J. Barre, erected in 1857 to commemorate Thomas Vesey Dawson who fell at the Battle of Inkerinan in 1854

Architectural Summer School at the Lady Anne Temple, Dartrey

STATE OF PLAY – CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

A serious and urgent agenda of addressing the **twin crises of biodiversity loss and climate chaos** underlies this Biodiversity and Heritage Strategic Plan. Climate change and biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse and extinction are listed as the biggest changes in the submissions received to Heritage Ireland 2030 public consultation.

The 2019 Global Assessment on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services found that nature across most of the globe has now been significantly altered by multiple human drivers, with the great majority of indicators of ecosystems and biodiversity showing rapid decline. At national and local level these facts are confirmed in the 2019 Article 17 report on the Status of EU protected Habitats and Species in Ireland.

The planet is currently amid the **sixth mass extinction of biodiversity**. Previous extinctions were caused by massive volcanic explosions, long ice ages, meteorite impacts and clashing continents. This extinction is caused by human impact on Earth. The extinction rate is now 1,000 times higher than normal background rates. Once a species goes extinct, there is no going back.

The 2019 Article 17 report on the Status of EU protected Habitats and Species in Ireland presents the results of the most recent assessments. 85% of habitats in Ireland are in unfavourable (inadequate or bad) status, and 46% of habitats are demonstrating ongoing declines. Habitat types common in Monaghan – blanket bog, transition mires are in bad condition and continue to decline.

One-third of bee species are threatened with extinction in Ireland. The Curlew has suffered widespread declines across its European range. Bird experts estimate that there has been a 97% decline in numbers over the last 40 years in Ireland.

The 2018 IPCC Special Report on **Global Warming** of 1.5°¹ finds that human activities are estimated to have caused approximately 1.0°C of global warming above pre-industrial levels, with

¹ Global Warming of 1.5°C, an IPCC special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty.

a likely range of 0.8°C to 1.2°C. Global warming is likely to reach 1.5°C between 2030 and 2052 if it continues to increase at the current rate.

On land, impacts on biodiversity and ecosystems, including species loss and extinction, are projected to be lower at 1.5°C of global warming compared to 2°C. Limiting global warming to 1.5°C compared to 2°C is projected to lower the impacts on terrestrial, freshwater and coastal ecosystems and to retain more of their services to humans.

Monaghan County Council published a Climate Change Adaption Plan in 2019.

A wide range of **adaptation** options are available to reduce the risks to natural and managed ecosystems –

- ecosystem-based adaptation,
- ecosystem restoration,
- avoiding degradation and deforestation,
- biodiversity management,
- using local knowledge and indigenous knowledge,

to reduce the risks to health, livelihoods, food, water, and economic growth

- disaster risk management,
- risk spreading and sharing,
- community-based adaptation,
- green infrastructure,
- sustainable land use and planning,
- sustainable water management.

“The report tells us that it is not too late to make a difference, but only if we start now at every level from local to global”

Sir Robert Watson, Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) chair. 2019

“Biodiversity and nature’s contribution to people are our common heritage and humanity’s most important life support safety-net”

Prof Sandra Diaz, IPBES, 2019

MONAGHAN HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY - PRIORITY STRATEGIC THEMES

 <p>CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION</p>	<p>Crucial to a sustainable present and future is the conservation and management of habitats so that they continue to deliver ecosystem services that increase the adaptive capacity of people and biodiversity. We will assess and protect biodiversity and heritage from the impacts of climate change and promote nature-led solutions to climate chaos.</p>
 <p>MONAGHAN'S WONDERFUL WETLANDS</p>	<p>Recognising the continuing decline of these habitat types nationally and their importance for biodiversity and climate change mitigation, we will build on our wetland surveys, mapping, public awareness and conservation work in the county.</p>
 <p>HEDGEROWS AND NATIVE WOODLAND</p>	<p>Aware of the important ecological and cultural heritage roles of hedgerows and native woodland, and their widespread inappropriate management and removal, we will create awareness and build capacity of landowners for their management and reinstatement, and we will celebrate good practice.</p>
 <p>THE WORM DITCH THE BLACK PIG'S DYKE</p>	<p>Cognisant of the significance of the cultural landscape of this archaeological monument, we will undertake and facilitate further research, dissemination of results, promote access and awareness in Monaghan and with stakeholders nationally and internationally.</p>
 <p>PRE-HISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGY</p>	<p>Recognising that the full extent and character of these monuments and landscapes is unknown, we will identify and pursue suitable initiatives to facilitate further research, awareness raising and stakeholder engagement about these places.</p>
 <p>PROTECTED STRUCTURES</p>	<p>Recognising that the built heritage belongs to everyone and is worthy of protection on the basis of contributions to cultural significance, local distinctiveness and sustainable development objectives, we will support the protection of buildings on the Record of Protected Structures, and those identified on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.</p>

 <p>VERNACULAR AND TRADITIONAL BUILDINGS</p>	<p>Noting the loss of vernacular buildings in the Monaghan landscape generally and conscious of the need for housing, re-use of existing resources, and retention of our cultural heritage, we will promote their sensitive use and re-use and create awareness of their settings, character and features, and seek wider recognition for the fact that older buildings contain much embodied energy with excellent potential for the incorporation of their design into sustainable building.</p>
 <p>HIGH NATURE VALUE FARMLAND</p>	<p>Recognising the important ecological contribution to biodiversity and climate change made by HNV farmland, we will encourage farming for nature practices at both small and large scales through awareness raising, stakeholder engagement and partnership.</p>
 <p>DEMESNES AND ESTATES</p>	<p>Conscious of the artistic, cultural, ecological and historical values of demesnes and estates, we will encourage appropriate sustainable uses for these assets to enable the retention of the unique relationships between buildings, gardens and designed landscapes and to recommend the adoption of further ACA designations to improve knowledge, understanding and protections.</p>
 <p>CROSS-BORDER HERITAGE</p>	<p>Sensitive to the maintenance of peace and good relationships, we recognise that the exploration of cultural heritage can play a part in identity building and cohesiveness in society, and we will work with partners to advise and develop programmes in this area.</p>
 <p>HISTORIC GRAVEYARDS, HOLY WELLS AND CHURCH RUINS</p>	<p>Accepting that historic graveyards are important to contemporary cultural and religious practice, we will work with local groups to build on the conservation plans already undertaken for sites, promote their heritage values widely and undertake conservation works.</p>
 <p>INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND TRADITIONS</p>	<p>Valuing our intangible cultural heritage for its intrinsic qualities as well as its potential for advising on options for sustainable livelihoods, we will collect information, promote the transmission of this knowledge and explore its significance.</p>
 <p>IRISH AND THE VERNACULAR ENGLISH</p>	<p>Valuing our spoken and written words and sayings as part of our heritage, we will endeavour to safeguard its distinctiveness and contribution to the understanding to many aspects of our cultural and natural heritage by working with experts in this field.</p>

Strategic Objectives and Organisation Goals

FUNDING AND FINANCIAL – Continue to provide a budget to the heritage section to provide a heritage service. Increase the uptake of funding for biodiversity and heritage in the county.

AUDIENCES – Keep in touch with our citizens about this plan, through the Monaghan County Council online newsletter, local media and regular workshops and events.

OPERATIONAL – Achieve a joined-up focus for biodiversity and heritage across Monaghan County Council to enable a more effective service.

KEY STRATEGIES OR COURSES OF ACTION

- Accelerate and intensify our efforts to improve awareness and halt biodiversity loss in the county.
- Lead by example, demonstrating good custodianship of local authority-owned heritage including maintaining appropriate use, sensitive re-use and adequate repair of heritage buildings and effective management of biodiversity.
- Incentivise private involvement in initiatives that have positive outcomes for biodiversity and heritage.
- Use existing legislation to support positive outcomes for biodiversity and heritage.
- Participate in Biodiversity Week, Heritage Week and World Wetland Day.
- Invite citizens to take part in inventories, surveys and protection, with the guidance of experts to ensure best practice and quality.
- Be mindful of needs for young people and design particular events and training for them.
- Support multi-stakeholder partnerships for heritage promotion and conservation.
- Search for supplementary funding.
- Make heritage more accessible through digital and other means where appropriate.

IMPLEMENTATION – HOW WILL WE DO IT AND MAKE IT A HABIT

- Annual Service Delivery Plans in accordance with the Monaghan County Council Corporate Plan, will include actions to deliver the Biodiversity and Heritage Strategic Plan on a yearly basis.
- Coach heritage section staff for achievement by providing training and mentoring.
- Encourage an organisation wide delivery through staff training and information.
- Heritage Section will update Heritage Forum members on a quarterly basis on progress with delivery.
- Monitor KPIs annually, and brainstorm and instigate corrective actions to enable improved performance where necessary.



Magheross Church, Carrickmacross

The Tin Church, Laragh

Framework for the strategic plan

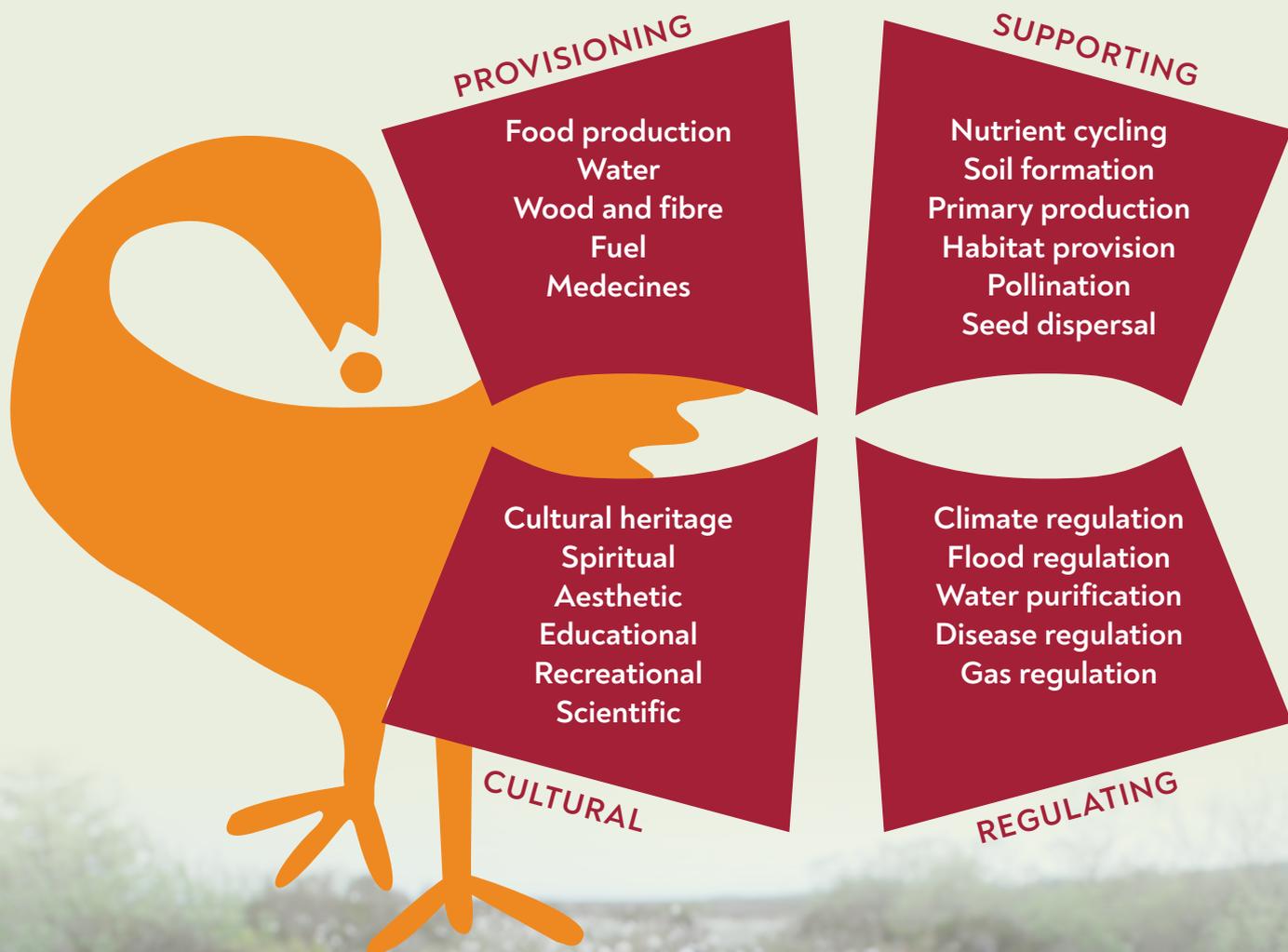
The Monaghan Biodiversity and Heritage Strategic Plan uses the Ecosystem Services model to frame the themes and desired impacts that will be prioritised over the lifetime of the strategic plan.

Ecosystem services are the benefits that nature provides for people. They maintain living conditions on earth and improve human quality of life. Four categories of ecosystem services are recognised – provisioning, supporting, regulating and cultural.

Loss of ecosystem services has powerful impacts on our economy and society.

Loss of ecosystem services negatively impacts our economy, while economic poverty is often the main cause of resource over-exploitation and unsustainable use of the environment. Loss of ecosystem services and degradation of natural capital further impoverishes disadvantaged societies. Economic inequality in turn reaffirms societal instability and dysfunction.

Engagement to local place and heritage helps individuals and communities in times of rapid change, as a cultural anchor providing stability and continuity. “Heritage has very little to do with the past but actually involves practices which are fundamentally concerned with assembling and designing the future...in anticipation of an outcome that will help constitute a specific (social, economic or ecological) resource in and for the future” (Harrison, 2015).



Action plan 2020-2025

1

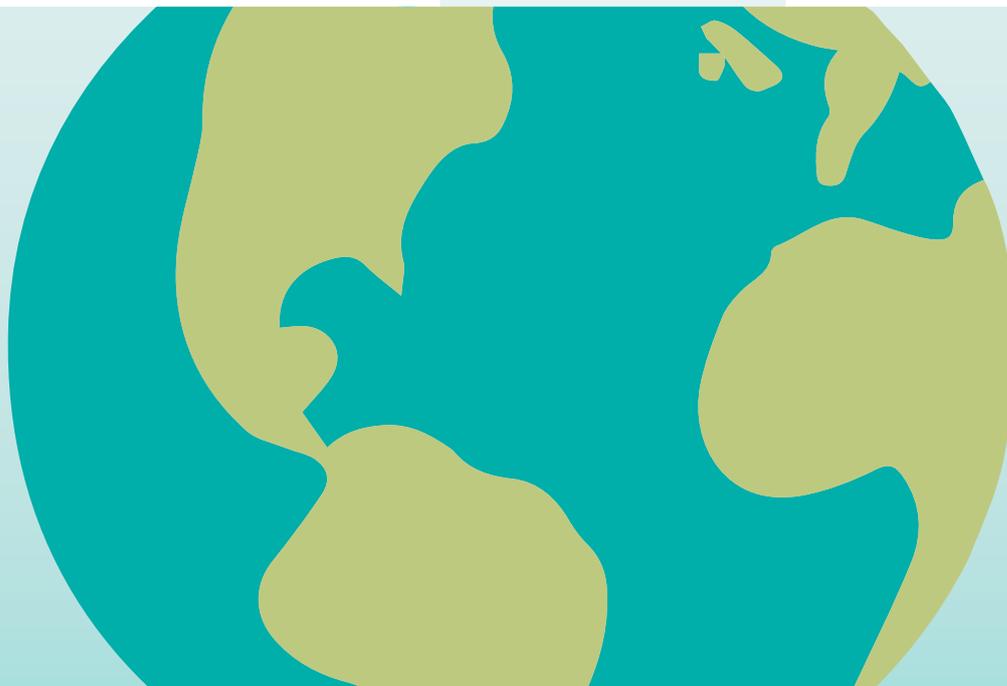


CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION

through heritage and biodiversity

Crucial to a sustainable present and future is the conservation and management of habitats so that they continue to deliver ecosystem services that increase the adaptive capacity of people and biodiversity. We will assess and protect biodiversity and heritage from the impacts of climate change.

ACTIVITIES	OUTCOME	IMPACT
Recommend the appointment of a suitably qualified Biodiversity Officer to support the local authority.	Biodiversity advice available to all local authority services.	Strengthen ecological expertise in Monaghan County Council.
Undertake a review of biodiversity assets in the county to assess their contribution for climate change mitigation and the risk posed to them by climate change.	Assessment undertaken of habitats and species.	Knowledge on how to progress measures to protect these biodiversity assets.
Undertake a review of the key Heritage and Cultural Assets in the county to assess their vulnerability from the impacts of climate change.	Identify and progress remedial measures for these important assets.	Resilience improved for heritage and cultural assets.
Highlight climate mitigation role of ecosystems as part of communications campaign to promote understanding and value of biodiversity.	Public awareness campaigns.	Increase awareness and appreciation of biodiversity and ecosystem services.



2



**MONAGHAN'S
WONDERFUL
WETLANDS**

Recognising the continuing decline of these habitat types nationally and their importance for biodiversity and climate change mitigation, we will build on our wetland surveys, mapping, public awareness and conservation work in the county.

ACTIVITIES	OUTCOME	IMPACT
Implement Conservation Plan for Sliabh Beagh.	Blanket Bog habitat condition increased and improved nesting, roosting, and foraging for Hen Harrier and other species.	Protect carbon sequestration function of peatland. Improved conservation status of blanket bog for wildlife and habitats.
Progress conservation of wetland sites across the county.	Improve biodiversity in the farming landscape.	Protect wildlife values and ecosystem services.
Assess environmental impact of all drainage/reclamation above 2ha.	Effective delivery of Planning & Development Regulations 2011.	Reduction in destruction and loss of wetland habitats.
Run workshops on species identification and recording.	Submission of species records to NBDC and improved skill set amongst local recorders.	Increase in records submitted. Increase in number of biological recorders in the county.
Conduct a public awareness campaign to advocate for wetlands and peatlands.	Information materials and media targeting different audiences and users of wetlands.	Improvement in negative attitude towards wetlands and fewer development applications submitted for these sites.
Establish a wetland network in the county.	Active citizen engagement and conservation of wetland sites.	Increase in conservation and survey activity on wetlands.
Collect biodiversity information for wetland sites and identify priority sites which deliver key ecosystem services.	Baseline available for ongoing monitoring of environmental condition.	Increase in knowledge and condition of local biodiversity



3



HEDGEROWS AND NATIVE WOODLAND

Aware of the important ecological and cultural roles of hedgerows and native woodland, and their widespread inappropriate management and removal, we will create awareness and build capacity of landowners for their management and reinstatement, and we will celebrate good practice.

ACTIVITIES	OUTCOME	IMPACT
Re-survey 2010 Monaghan Hedgerow Survey sites.	Assessment of trends and condition.	Up-to-date information available to all.
Hold native hedge planting and laying workshops.	Practical skills shared.	Increase in traditional management techniques.
Produce Heritage at the Heart Hedgerow podcast or film.	Easily accessible and evocative information available.	Increase in sensitivity to role of hedgerows in landscape.
Identify Native Woodland Sites in county.	Map of Native Woodland sites.	Information on this important habitat available.



4



**THE WORM DITCH
THE BLACK
PIG'S DYKE**

Cognisant of the significance of the cultural landscape of this archaeological monument, we will undertake and facilitate further research, dissemination of results, promote access and awareness in Monaghan and with stakeholders nationally and internationally.

ACTIVITIES	OUTCOME	IMPACT
Publish Archaeological Monograph.	Permanent record of excavations and research available for scholars and researchers worldwide.	Increase in visibility among academic and research stakeholders of the significance of the monument for understanding the pre-historic and early medieval period.
Hold a research symposium.	Record the symposium presentations and make widely available on the internet.	Disseminate findings and discover new avenues for investigation, and potential collaborations.
Organise further research and excavation using new engagement methods.	Determine extent and significance of findings from 2019 geophysical survey.	Involvement of new audiences in archaeological investigations in Monaghan to co-produce archaeological findings with experts.
Determine how best to enable public access to the monument.	Stretch owned by Monaghan County Council to be accessible by digital or physical means.	Add to the heritage tourism and educational offer and increase awareness of the site and its interpretation amongst visitors.
Publish book on Black Pig's Dyke for non-specialists.	Volume 3 of Monaghan's Heritage Series.	Increase local understanding of significance of the site.

5



**PRE-HISTORIC
ARCHAEOLOGY**

Recognising that the full extent and character of these monuments and landscapes is unknown, we will identify and pursue suitable initiatives to facilitate further research, awareness raising and stakeholder engagement about these places.

ACTIVITIES	OUTCOME	IMPACT
Instigate landscape study focusing on Mullyash Cairn and other sites in this complex.	Fuller understanding of the significance of the site and its society.	Develop joint approach between agencies north and south.
Develop programme of public engagement, materials and field trips.	Improved realisation amongst communities about the pre-history in their local landscape.	Create awareness about these monuments.
Seek publication of academic research on Drummirril Rock Art site, Inniskeen.	Build on previous findings and encourage additional explorations.	Awaken interest in this place by researchers who can include it in their work programmes.
Encourage participation in Adopt-A-Monument scheme or similar initiatives.	Hands-on engagement and involvement in archaeology.	More applications and groups engaged with the Heritage Council.



6



PROTECTED STRUCTURES

Recognising that the built heritage belongs to everyone and is worthy of protection on the basis of contributions to cultural significance, local distinctiveness and sustainable development objectives, we will support the protection of buildings on the Record of Protected Structures, and those identified on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

ACTIVITIES	OUTCOME	IMPACT
Recommend the engagement of a suitably qualified conservation officer to support the local authority.	Advice on works affecting protected structures locally available.	Improved conservation standards for built heritage.
Seek a review of the current record to take account of all the buildings in Monaghan identified by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.	Inclusion of wider representation of important buildings on the RPS in the County Development Plan.	Increase in built heritage structures protected under the Planning and Development Acts.
Organise built heritage workshops for owners and practitioners.	Engagement with owners about supports that are available.	Improved conservation standards for built heritage.



7



VERNACULAR AND TRADITIONAL BUILDINGS

Noting the loss of vernacular buildings in the Monaghan landscape generally and conscious of the need for housing, re-use of existing resources, and retention of our cultural heritage, we will promote their sensitive use and re-use and create awareness of their settings, character and features, and seek wider recognition for the fact that older buildings contain much embodied energy with excellent potential for the incorporation of their design into sustainable building.

ACTIVITIES	OUTCOME	IMPACT
Publish book on Monaghan’s traditional buildings.	Volume 2 of Monaghan Heritage Series available.	Change in attitudes and improved awareness about overall value and potential of traditional buildings.
Organise workshops and fieldtrips for the public, planners and architects.	Increase in awareness of traditional features amongst these professionals and enhance understanding of the wide advantages for sensitive re-use.	Increase in re-use of abandoned buildings and in new design using vernacular principles.
Produce a Heritage at the Heart podcast or short film.	Increase in awareness of traditional features amongst these professionals and enhance understanding of the wide advantages for sensitive re-use.	Increase awareness of characteristics of these buildings.



8



**HIGH NATURE
VALUE FARMLAND**

Recognising the important ecological contribution to biodiversity and climate change made by HNV farmland, we will encourage farming for nature practices at both small and large scales through awareness raising, stakeholder engagement and partnership.

ACTIVITIES	OUTCOME	IMPACT
Promote Pollination Plan activities on farms.	Distribution of farmland actions for pollinator guidance locally.	Increased ecological awareness of what is possible amongst farming community.
Arrange specific talks or workshops for farmers on HNV farming practices.	Practical skills shared on how to implement HNV actions.	Increased area in wildlife margins, meadows, better hedges.
Support development of Results Based Agricultural Payment scheme in key areas.	Improved outcomes for nature in farmland and access to locally based scheme for farmers.	Assist upland areas to participate in nature friendly farming schemes.



9



DEMESNES AND ESTATES

Conscious of the artistic, cultural, ecological and historical values of demesnes and estates, we will encourage appropriate sustainable uses for these assets to enable the retention of the unique relationships between buildings, gardens and designed landscapes and to recommend the adoption of further ACA designations to improve knowledge, understanding and protections.

ACTIVITIES	OUTCOME	IMPACT
Ensure Monaghan County Council engages specialist advice regarding heritage character of properties in its control.	Conservation, use and sensitive re-use of these assets, while allowing access to the public in a sustainable way.	Conservation plans for Rossmore Park and Hope Castle Demesne/Lough Muckno.
Work with landowners to determine the full heritage and biodiversity values of their sites.	Move towards sustainable and holistic management.	Improved knowledge of heritage features and values of these places.
Explore the potential for ACA designations.	Improved understanding and management of demesnes and estates.	Number of ACAs designated under Planning and Development Acts.



10



CROSS-BORDER HERITAGE

Sensitive to the maintenance of peace and good relationships, we recognise that the exploration of cultural heritage can play a part in identity building and cohesiveness in society, and we will work with partners to advise and develop programmes in this area.

ACTIVITIES	OUTCOME	IMPACT
Support the new Peace Campus cultural heritage programme.	Broader understanding of heritage, culture and identities.	Education and engagement benefits for visitors and users.
Continue to work with agencies, local authorities and communities along the border on heritage and biodiversity initiatives.	Holistic approach taken to heritage and culture.	Cross-jurisdictional relationships and projects developed and operated together.
Advise and provide information on heritage and biodiversity values of Ulster Canal to project team.	Sensitive and vibrant re-use of Ulster Canal infrastructure and authentic interpretation.	Restoration and conservation of Ulster Canal heritage assets.



11



HISTORIC GRAVEYARDS, HOLY WELLS AND CHURCH RUINS

Accepting that historic graveyards are important to contemporary cultural and religious practice, we will work with local groups to build on the conservation plans already undertaken for sites, promote their heritage values widely and undertake conservation works.

ACTIVITIES	OUTCOME	IMPACT
Establish historic graveyard network.	Active and sharing between communities across the county.	Protection of cultural and natural heritage.
Make bye-laws at sensitive sites.	Prevent removal of old headstones and installation of inappropriate memorials.	Protection of cultural heritage.
Publish and promote conservation plans for sites.	Active and appropriate care and conservation of historic graveyards, holy-wells and church ruins.	Protection of cultural and natural heritage at these sites and expression of their heritage values.
Secure funds for small-scale conservation and consolidation works to masonry ruins.	Vulnerable structures repaired and conserved.	Protection of built cultural heritage for future generations.



12



INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND TRADITIONS

Valuing our intangible cultural heritage for its intrinsic values as well as its potential for advising on options for sustainable livelihoods, we will collect information, promote the transmission of this knowledge and explore its significance.

ACTIVITIES	OUTCOME	IMPACT
Conduct survey of holy-wells.	Map and information on their cultural and religious use.	Add to knowledge on cultural heritage and archaeology.
Collect folklore and information on cures across the county.	Record of knowledge associated with cures, those that have the cure, and how they are given.	Prevent loss of this intangible knowledge for future generations.
Collect information on placenames & fieldnames in the county.	Record of intangible local heritage available and engagement with custodians and volunteers.	Prevent loss of this local knowledge.
Support initiatives to unearth musical heritage of the county.	Information on significant musicians, their tunes and associations available.	Increase to the musical canon for the county.
Organise talks on aspects of intangible heritage of the county.	Authenticity maintained, through awareness and information sharing.	Transmission of intangible cultural heritage and its authentic representation in the community.



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**IRISH AND THE
VERNACULAR
ENGLISH**

Valuing our spoken and written words and sayings as part of our heritage, we will endeavour to safeguard its distinctiveness and contribution to the understanding to many aspects of our cultural and natural heritage by working with experts in this field.

ACTIVITIES	OUTCOME	IMPACT
Collect information on the local vernacular and origins of words and sayings used in Monaghan.	Bring aspects of our language to a wider audience and create new partnerships.	Add to knowledge on evolution of language in the county.
Develop bilingual publications and exhibitions to support communication of activities under this plan.	More prominent link between language and other aspects of our heritage.	Prevent loss of this intangible knowledge for future generations.
Collect information on origins of family surnames and nicknames.	Comprehensive list available.	Prevent loss of this local knowledge for future generations.

Appendices

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – HOW WE MEASURE SUCCESS

MEASURE	CURRENT	TARGET
Number of people at Heritage Week events per year	1700	2,500
Number of people at other awareness events per year	600	2,000
Training days held per year	10	12
Sites under conservation initiatives (graveyards, buildings etc)	10	20
Land area under direct conservation initiatives (nature)	3,000ha	3,600ha
Staff number in heritage section	3	6
Percentage of actions in plan in action		100% end 2025
Heritage-in-Schools school number participation	18	30
Heritage Forum meetings per year	3	4
Heritage series publications	1	3
Heritage at the Heart podcasts	5	10

Overarching policies and plans

NATIONAL HERITAGE PLAN. HERITAGE IRELAND 2030 (IN PREPARATION)

As stated in the consultation document
Heritage Ireland 2030:

- is the Government's commitment to a revitalised and refreshed National Heritage Plan;
- will recognise the vital role our heritage plays in our community, our economy and our society;
- will be a coherent, comprehensive and inspiring framework of values, principles and strategic priorities which will guide and inform the heritage sector over the next decade;
- will enshrine the shared responsibility of people, communities, businesses and local and national Government in protecting our heritage and ensuring it is cared for into the future;
- will help us enjoy, understand and care for our heritage;
- be formed around three Themes; National Leadership and Heritage, Heritage Partnerships and Communities and Heritage - built on a vision of our heritage being valued and protected for future generations, cherished and enjoyed.

BIODIVERSITY NATIONAL ACTION PLAN 2017-2021

VISION FOR BIODIVERSITY: That biodiversity and ecosystems in Ireland are conserved and restored, delivering benefits essential for all sectors of society and that Ireland contributes to efforts to halt the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystems in the EU and globally.

OBJECTIVE 1 Mainstream biodiversity into decision-making across all sectors

1.1.4. Strengthen ecological expertise in local authorities and relevant Government Departments and agencies 2017-2021.

1.1.5. Local Authorities will review and update their Biodiversity and Heritage Action Plans.

1.1.6. Local Authorities will review and update their Development Plans and policies to include policies and objectives for the protection and restoration of biodiversity.

1.1.7. Develop a Green Infrastructure at local, regional and national levels and promote the use of nature-based solutions for the delivery of a coherent and integrated network.

OBJECTIVE 2 Strengthen the knowledge base for conservation, management, and sustainable use of biodiversity

2.1.12. Hedgerow surveys will be continued by Local Authorities.

OBJECTIVE 3 Increase awareness and appreciation of biodiversity and ecosystem services

3.1.7. Develop and implement a communications campaign in support of public and sectoral understanding of the value of biodiversity and full implementation of this NBAP.

OBJECTIVE 6 Expand and improve management of protected areas and species

6.1.2. Develop and utilise licensing and consent systems to facilitate sustainable activities within Natura 2000 sites.

6.1.7. Implement the conservation measures necessary to achieve the published conservation objectives for Natura 2000 sites. Develop and implement additional measures as necessary to achieve favourable conservation status both nationally and at site level.

6.2.1. Increase connectivity of the protected areas network using appropriate buffer zones, corridors, stepping stones and/or flyways.

NATIONAL CLIMATE ACTION PLAN 2019 - TO TACKLE CLIMATE BREAKDOWN

Under the Programme for Government a Citizens Assembly was established to examine the challenge and it has signposted the way for radical reform.

The recent report of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Climate Action, *Climate Change: A Cross-Party Consensus for Action* set out a strong menu of recommendations for policy action, building on the work of the Citizens' Assembly.

The report of the Joint Committee has been unanimously endorsed, and a climate and biodiversity emergency declared, by Dáil Éireann, providing a very solid foundation on which to build this ambitious, all of Government, Climate Action Plan.



HERITAGE AT THE HEART. HERITAGE COUNCIL STRATEGY 2018 – 2022

VISION: The Heritage Council is motivated by the prospect that by 2022, heritage will be at the heart of Irish society and decision-making and that Ireland will be internationally recognised as a centre of excellence in heritage management, conservation and community engagement.

RESPOND to the challenges of Brexit by addressing any resulting identity issues and by focusing on areas where heritage has a relevance so as to minimise any potentially negative impacts

SUPPORT the local authority Heritage Officer Network and assess how the range of local heritage services can be expanded to maximise the leadership role of local authorities.

ALL-IRELAND POLLINATOR PLAN

Monaghan County Council is a local authority partner to this plan and is working to enhance biodiversity to support pollinators. The AIPP is a strategy that works to support the decline of pollinators including our 98 bee species, one-third of which are threatened with extinction.



Guiding Principals

HERITAGE VALUES include aesthetic, historic, scientific, social, spiritual, political, national, cultural, educational, recreational, economic and resource.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT In 1987, the Brundtland Commission published its report, Our Common Future, to link the issues of economic development and environmental stability. In doing so, this report provided the oft-cited definition of sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (United Nations General Assembly, 1987, p. 43).

ECOSYSTEM APPROACH is based on the application of appropriate scientific methodologies focused on levels of biological organisation, which encompass the essential structure, processes, functions and interactions among organisms and their environment. It recognises that humans, with their cultural diversity, are an integral component of many ecosystems. <https://www.cbd.int/doc/publications/ea-text-en.pdf>

INTEGRATING HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY The dissolution between the old divisions of nature and culture expands creative and entrepreneurial connections - “the folding together of nature and culture...has radical and transformative potential” (Harrison, Beyond “Natural” and “Cultural” Heritage: Toward an Ontological Politics of Heritage in the Age of Anthropocene, 2015, p. 34)

PARTICIPATION Changing management practices such as integrated conservation led by multi-skilled professionals with local communities, and valuing local distinctiveness are at the core of a move to sustainable development within heritage. Consumers of heritage become its custodians, as heritage remains in its place, communities start to engage with their local heritage, and as it is increasingly recognised that “heritage can strengthen community ties and

community organisation and...essential to the very identity and unique character of communities” (Gentry, 2013, p. 510). In this context, Holtorf (2012) refers to heritage “stabilizing communities by an inclusive rather than an exclusive agenda” (Holtorf, 2012, p. 169). There is a shift from collecting objects into museums to in situ conservation of objects, places and practices (Harrison, 2013, p. 86).

CONSERVATION is any action that is designed to maintain the significance of a heritage object or place, and this process “starts the moment a place is recognised as having cultural values and singled out for protection”.

PRECAUTIONARY PRINCIPLE The precautionary principle establishes that “where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measure to prevent environmental degradation” (United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, 1992).

POLLUTER PAYS PRINCIPLE states that “governments should require polluting entities to bear the costs of their pollution rather than impose those costs on others or on the environment” (Dernbach J. C., 1998, p. 58).

SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL TOURISM is the integrated management of cultural heritage and tourism activities in conjunction with the local community creating social, environmental and economic benefits for all stakeholders, to achieve tangible and intangible cultural heritage conservation and sustainable tourism development.

HIGH NATURE VALUE FARMING High Nature Value (HNV) farmland is extensively managed farmland that supports high biodiversity. This farmland is important for the conservation of semi-natural habitats and the plants and animals linked with them. Supporting this type of farmland will ensure high levels of farmland biodiversity, vibrant rural communities, high water, air and soil quality and resistance to

flooding among other things. Farming sustains the biodiversity of these landscapes and is integral to maintaining their high nature value.

NATURAL CAPITAL is the world’s stock of natural resources, which includes geology, soils, air, water and all living organisms. Some natural capital assets provide people with free goods and services, often called ecosystem services. These underpin our economy and society and make human life possible.

NATURE-BASED OR ECOSYSTEM BASED ADAPTATION actions are actions that restore and protect natural habitats to help people adapt to the effects of climate change. There is an increasing awareness that nature can often provide the most cost-effective way of adapting to climate change whilst also protecting the ecosystem services on which we depend.

PROCESS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF BIODIVERSITY & HERITAGE STRATEGIC PLAN

- Monaghan County Heritage Forum workshop date 2018
- Five public workshops May 2018
- Presentation of “Towards a working draft” to heritage forum meeting October 2019
- Draft working document end October 2019
- Draft document to heritage forum members December 2019
- Draft document to strategic policy committee March 2020
- Public consultation on draft until 30 April 2020
- Final document to Heritage Forum and Strategic Policy Committee October 2020
- Monaghan County Council meeting November 2020



Monaghan Biodiversity & Heritage

Strategic Plan 2020 - 2025



“The report tells us that it is not too late to make a difference, but only if we start now at every level from local to global”

Sir Robert Watson, Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) chair. 2019

“Biodiversity and nature’s contribution to people are our common heritage and humanity’s most important life support safety-net”

Prof Sandra Diaz, IPBES, 2019

An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council



This project received funding from The Heritage Council in 2020