



# 101 Event Ideas



National  
Heritage Week

A Heritage Council programme

National Heritage Week 2023 will take place from 12th – 20th August. The theme of Heritage Week 2023 is “Living Heritage”. You are encouraged to create events or projects that explore our intangible cultural heritage and links with the past through customs, practices and traditions.

Coordinated by the Heritage Council, National Heritage Week is Ireland’s most popular cultural event. National Heritage Week is part of European Heritage Days which promotes Europe’s common cultural heritage.



## Who is this booklet for?

This collection of ideas is for anyone thinking about organising an event or project for National Heritage Week 2023. You can be an individual with a passion for a heritage site or tradition, part of a heritage group, advocacy group, guild, association or non-profit organisation. Take inspiration from these ideas and create your own event!

## Want to get involved in National Heritage Week 2023?

- 1 Take a suggestion from this list or plan your own unique event or project.
- 2 Visit [heritageweek.ie](https://heritageweek.ie) for helpful tips and resources to plan your event or project.
- 3 Register your event or project on [heritageweek.ie](https://heritageweek.ie) from 2nd May 2023.





## Living Heritage

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### 1 Host Traditional Dance Classes

This does not necessarily have to be Irish dancing, but can be traditional dance from any culture.

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### 2 Record Local Traditions

Explore what traditions exist in your local community or even your family. Record these on video or audio and create a project around them.

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### 3 Community Showcase on Diversity

Have a gallery or exhibition in a local hall or community area. Ask children of the community to find traditional artefacts from the local community or photos of local traditions taking place.

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### 4 Local Tradition Exhibitions

Museums could host an exhibition of photographs of local traditions or customs and objects associated with these traditions.

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### 5 Traditional Music

Organise a traditional music performance. This can be Irish music or traditional music from other countries.

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### 6 Host a Traditional Market

Have a market day in your locality featuring products that have been created locally using traditional skills.

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## 7 Traditional Baking and Cooking

Run a workshop or demonstration on traditional recipes for cooking or baking breads, cakes, etc.

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## 8 Bake Sale

Have a local bake sale based on traditional family recipes for savoury treats!

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## 9 Traditional Farming Skills

Host an event on traditional farming skills such as ploughing with horses, loy digging or other practices.

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## 10 Dancing at the crossroad

Revive the tradition of dancing at the crossroads for an evening event with a difference!

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## 11 Explore Family Traditions

What family traditions do you have? Record a video interview with the different generations in your family and learn about the practices that are part of your family.

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## 12 Create a Virtual Exhibition

Create a virtual exhibition of photographs, stories, customs or traditions and upload as a project.

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## 13 Our History in 10 objects

Ask your community to submit objects that have historical significance to their family. Host a night where each person shares the story of their object.

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## 14 Crafts Day

Invite others in the community to share their craft skills with an open day in your community.

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## 15 Traditional Story Telling

Organise a story telling event where anyone can share stories passed on to them from their family.

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## 16 Explore Traditional Pilgrimages

Are there traditional pilgrimages associated with churches or holy wells in your area? Host an event exploring this pilgrimage path.



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## 17 Holy Wells

Discover and explore the holy wells in your area. Research the history of the wells and any traditions associated with them.



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## 18 Sports Day

Host a sports day exploring the traditional sports of your community. This could be local sports but also sports of international members of your community.

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## 19 Explore Traditional Games

Do games such as card games or traditional children's games exist in your area? Collect the names and rules of these games and share as a project.

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## Built Heritage

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### 20 Traditional Skills Celebration

Organise workshops that teach sustainable traditional skills such as woodworking, lime plastering, mud walling or stone masonry. These workshops can emphasise the importance of preserving cultural knowledge while promoting eco-friendly practices.

### 21 Dry stone walling demonstration

Invite a local expert to share their dry stone walling skills and give anyone the opportunity to give it a try.



### 22 Orphaned Heritage

Are there abandoned sites or forgotten buildings in your area? Research and explore these sites. Host an event and share what you have found.

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## 23 Explore digital heritage

In recent years vast heritage resources have been placed online, so now everything from historic mapping, monuments, aerial photographs, surveys of monuments and buildings are just a few clicks away. See what you can find for your local area and develop into a project.

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## 24 Create a selfie scavenger hunt

Prepare a list of photos which participants must take within a certain time limit of monuments or buildings from different time periods. e.g. a Georgian building, a local statue etc.



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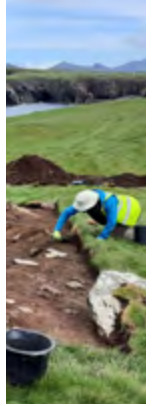
## 25 Lego competition

Organise a Lego building competition based on the historic buildings in your local area.

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## 26 Explore an archaeological site

Our landscapes are full of monuments from pre-history, the medieval times and the more recent past. A tour with a guide or archaeologist can bring sites like these to life.



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## 27 Visit a conservation project or archaeological excavation

Conservation projects often hold open days to show how works are progressing, and archaeological excavations have open days and tours too. Sometimes opportunities are also available to work on excavations!

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## 28 Adopt a Monument

Have a look at the Heritage Council's Adopt a Monument programme and the toolkits provided, and consider adopting a monument!

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## 29 Graveyard Recording

Irish graveyards are full of heritage. Gravestones have a range of information about past communities and former lives. Explore and record the names of gravestones in your locality.

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# Natural Heritage

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## 30 Leaf Hunt

Host an event to collect and identify as many leaves as possible.

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## 31 Art in the Wild class

Invite an artist to hold an art class in the wild, with a Plan B to move indoors if weather dictates.

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## 32 Hold a Wildlife Safari

Lead a walk through a local biodiverse area. making use of local knowledge to find the best route. Try to inspire people by highlighting the interesting things close to home.

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## 33 Host a Classic Wildlife Film

There are a range of classics now available: My Octopus Teacher; Tarka the Otter; Ken etc. If an outdoor option is available, that will only heighten the experience!

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### 34 Go Rock Pooling

Pick a safe location. The National Biodiversity Data Centre will help you to find a suitable site: [exploreyourshore.ie](http://exploreyourshore.ie)

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### 35 Sugaring & wine roping for moths

Host an evening event, where all moths should be placed in suitable pots and released once observed: [butterfly-conservation.org/news-and-blog/a-recipe-for-moths-sugaring-wine-roping](http://butterfly-conservation.org/news-and-blog/a-recipe-for-moths-sugaring-wine-roping)

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### 36 Story-telling in a wood

Nothing beats a classic tale of the Gruffalo while being in Gruffalo habitat for our minors!

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### 37 Pond dipping

Wellies at the ready! This can be a messy and fun event for children – best to have some insects to hand for inspection!

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### 38 Hold a BioBlitz

Traditionally held over a 24-hour period (not necessary however), attempt to record as many plants and animals from an area. All records should be logged with the National Biodiversity Data Centre if at all possible.

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### 39 BioBingo

Send a child out to find a list of natural items. Photocopy a field sheet with a list of nature items to collect such as feathers, a flower, a pine cone and more.

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## Cultural Heritage

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### 40 Host a fashion Show

What is the local dress associated with your area? What traditional dress exists in your community? Invite others to showcase their traditional dress.

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### 41 Organise pottery workshops

Working with plasticine, visitors could learn about traditional practices from experienced local artists.

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### 42 Organise an exhibition of traditional crafts

The exhibition might include different tools and utensils used in practicing the crafts.

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### 43 Open a Living Library!

Invite people in your local area to share their knowledge and experience of traditional practices at a special event, with a view to promoting social inclusion and fostering intergenerational exploration.

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### 44 Heritage Café Conversation

Invite the local community for a cup of tea and a conversation at café-style tables about what heritage means to them. Record thoughts and ideas using sticky-notes or invite people to add key words to a white board or poster paper.



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### 45 Record a podcast

Create a podcast that explores aspects of local heritage with interviews from people telling stories from their area.



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### 46 Skills Swap Event

Host a skills swap event where people share their skills with one another. From lacemaking to wood carving to family tree research, we can all learn from each other!

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### 47 Explore old Social Venues

Organise a guided tour of an old theatre or ballroom with people who used to work or socialise there. Research what events took place there.

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### 48 Have a Folklore talk

Research and explore the folklore stories of your area and invite others to share them through a community event.

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### 49 Unusual Collections

Curate an exhibition and invite local people to share their unusual collections which can be anything from dolls to beer mats to callcards!

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# Sustainability & Climate Change

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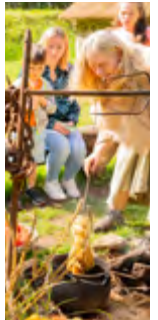
## 50 Sustainable Heritage Tours

Arrange guided tours focusing on local historical sites and natural landscapes. These tours can highlight sustainable practices and local flora and fauna, while also discussing the effects of climate change on these heritage sites.

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## 51 Traditional Cuisine and Sustainability

Organise a food festival showcasing local, traditional cuisine made from sustainably sourced ingredients. Workshops and demonstrations can highlight the importance of sustainable food practices in preserving cultural heritage and combating climate change.



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## 52 Upcycling and Repair Workshops

Organise workshops where participants can learn how to upcycle or repair items, such as clothing, furniture, or electronics. This promotes a circular economy and helps preserve the environment by reducing waste.

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### 53 Eco-friendly Heritage Market

Host a market showcasing local crafts, produce, and services that prioritise sustainability and eco-friendly practices. This encourages support for businesses that value the environment and helps preserve local heritage.

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### 54 Documentary Film Screenings

Host screenings of documentaries that focus on climate change, sustainability, and the impacts on cultural and natural heritage. Follow up the screenings with Q&A sessions featuring local experts or the filmmakers themselves.

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### 55 Host A Tree Planting Day

Plant trees in your community and host a tree planting day to get the whole community involved.

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### 56 Host A Nature journaling Event

Nature journaling is a simple, creative, and introspective way to learn about our environment. Host an event for anyone to learn this practice.

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### 57 Explore how to Save Energy

Invite an expert to speak on the ways individuals and families can save energy and benefit the environment.

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### 58 Have a Recycled Material Challenge

Gather previously used materials and challenge participants to make something new from the materials.

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### 59 Clean-Up

Organise a clean-up in your local community whether in urban or rural areas.

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## Explore your Area

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### 60 Field Name Recording

Explore your local area and record the names of fields of your townland or parish.

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### 61 Local Industries

What were the popular local industries in your area? Are there buildings or history that you can explore?

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### 62 Shopfront Display

Ask local shops to explore the history of their business with a window display of their history.

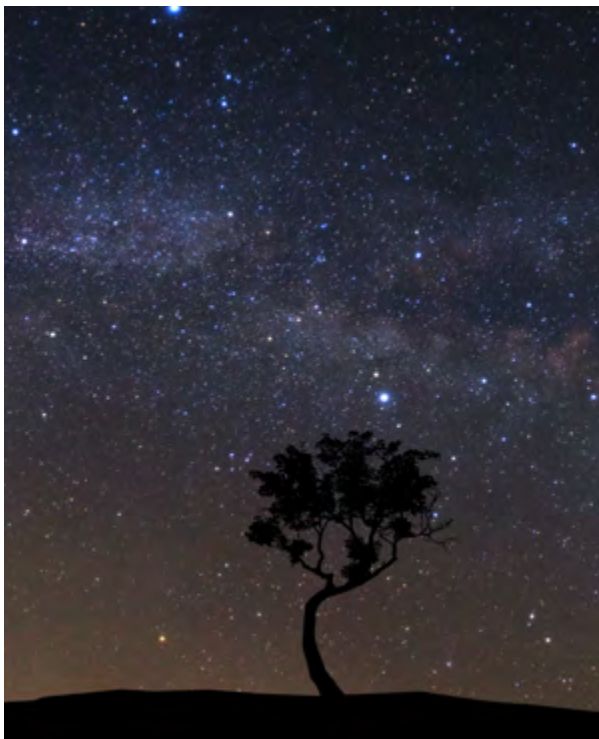
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### 63 Public Mural

Invite the community to paint a public mural based on the story of your village or town.

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## 64 Dark skies night

Plan a dark skies night in your village or town. Encourage everyone to turn off their lights and go stargazing.

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## 65 Local Place Names

Host an event exploring local townland names. Visit [logainm.ie](http://logainm.ie) to start your research.

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## 66 Create A Heritage Trail

Create a heritage trail around your area. Print maps for locals and visitors to explore.

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## 67 Vintage Machinery

Host a day of vintage machinery demonstrations. Invite owners to come and share how these machines were used.

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## 68 'Secret Stories of...' tour

Focus on little known facts and forgotten stories of your area and organise an event to reveal the stories.

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## 69 Forgotten Paths or Tracks

Using historic maps, host an event to explore forgotten or disused paths or routeways in your area.

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## Inclusivity & Community

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### 70 Community Garden Initiatives

Organise a community garden event where participants can learn about native plants, sustainable gardening practices, and the importance of local biodiversity. This can also involve planting native trees or creating pollinator-friendly habitats.

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### 71 Plan a traditional sports day

Why not use your local GAA pitch to show people new to Ireland the basics of football and hurling? Ask them to teach you their traditional games.



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### 72 Host An event in a Retirement Home

Bring Heritage Week to those who cannot come to it. Host a sean-nós storyteller in a nursing home or invite residents of nursing home to share stories or memories in an event.

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### 73 Traditional Cooking Class

Invite members of your community from different backgrounds to come and demonstrate a traditional dish to their culture and how they prepare it!

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### 74 Memory café

Host an event in a local social space and invite community members to bring along a photo and share the story of that photo.



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### 75 Learn a Folk Dance

Have members of the community from various backgrounds come together and demonstrate a particular type of folk dance.

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### 76 Language Exchange

Host a language exchange event where people can share some common phrases from their native language!



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### 77 Create a large textile piece

Look at the history of textiles and textile production in your local area. Could you link up with artists and maker groups to create a mural or tapestry or other large-scale piece to tell your group's stories?

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### 78 Digital Archiving

Does your community or group have a large paper archive? Create a project exploring how you can archive this material.

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### 79 Where We Walk

Look at the street names in your area. Who or what are they named after? What events do they commemorate? Create a project or event based on your discoveries.

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# Wild Child Day

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## 80 Eco-scavenger hunt

Organise a scavenger hunt with clues and challenges that teach participants about local flora, fauna, and ecosystems, as well as sustainable practices and climate-friendly actions.

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## 81 Upcycling workshop

Host a hands-on workshop where children can create art or useful items from recycled materials, like plastic bottles, old clothes, or newspapers.

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## 82 Nature-based storytelling

Invite local storytellers or environmental educators to share stories with a focus on nature, conservation, and climate action

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### 83 Climate action superhero costume contest

Encourage participants to create and wear costumes made from sustainable materials, representing their favourite climate action superheroes.

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### 84 Bicycle parade

Organise a bike ride around the community to promote sustainable transport and teach participants about the benefits of cycling for the environment.

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### 85 Seedling planting

Provide children with seedlings and teach them how to plant and care for them, emphasising the importance of reforestation and carbon sequestration.



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### 86 Wildlife discovery walk

Arrange a guided walk with a local ecologist to explore the area's native species and habitats, discussing the impacts of climate change on local ecosystems

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### 87 Mini Bug Hunt

Bring along magnifying glasses and identification sheets for a mini-beast hunt

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### 88 Urban Wildlife Tour

Explore the creatures that live in our urban environment and how they have adapted to it!

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### 89 Build a Home

Run a workshop to learn how to build a bird box or bat box.

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# Water Heritage Day

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## 90 Currach Making

Is there a craftsperson or group building or maintaining currachs in your area? Have a demonstration day on the currach and explore its history.

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## 91 Cultural Heritage of Waterways

Is there cultural heritage associated with waterways in your area? Are there poems or stories about rivers or loughs that you can explore?

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## 92 Tour local islands

Are there inland or coastal islands in your area? Conduct a water heritage boat tour of the islands.

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## 93 Explore water parks

Gather a group and explore the biodiversity and history of local waterworks or loughs.

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## 94 Conduct A River Safari

Time to see what you can learn about river invertebrates, fish, otters, invasive species, biosecurity, dragons, folklore and much more in local rivers.

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## 95 Produce a Booklet or Online Project on a local waterway

Gather experts in your community such as Historians, ecologists, writers, birders etc. Create a a booklet or online projects on a local waterway.



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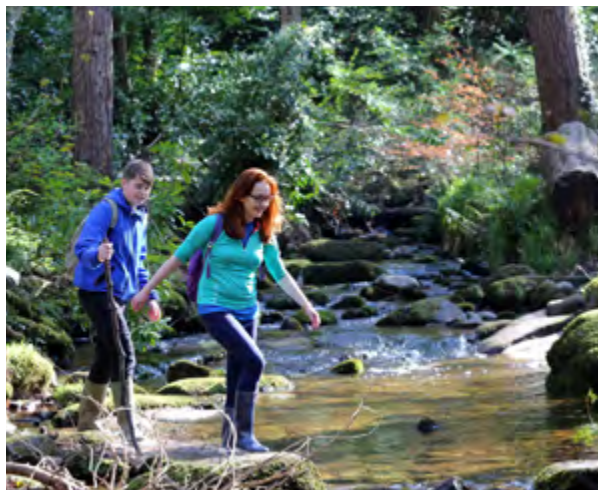
## 96 Create a River Festival

Go big with an entire river festival. Invite guest speakers for talks, run a beach art or sandcastle competition, treasure hunt or more!

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## 97 A bike ride along a River

Combine sustainable transportation and exploring local biodiversity. Conduct a bicycle tour that allows more visiting time and better appreciation of nature.



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## 98 Follow A River

Do you live near a short river that you could follow from source to sea? Take stops at important geological, historical and natural heritage sites along the route. This event could be done by bus or for the adventurous, by kayak or canoe.

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## 99 Water Industry

Are there mills or other buildings in your area that used water for industry? Explore these industries and their stories.

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## 100 Legends and folktales

What are the legends and folktales associated with the rivers and waterways of your area? Explore the National Folklore Collection for inspiration.

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## And Finally...

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### 101 Take Inspiration!

Get inspired for next year! Take part and join in other events taking place across National Heritage Week 2023.

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# National Heritage Week

A **Heritage Council** programme

[heritageweek.ie](http://heritageweek.ie)



An Roinn Tithíochta,  
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta  
Department of Housing,  
Local Government and Heritage



European Heritage Days  
Journées européennes  
du patrimoine



**Fáilte  
Ireland**



An Chomhairle Oidhreachta  
The Heritage Council