

National Heritage Week

A Heritage Council programme



Handbook for Event Organisers





Contents



Message from our CEO	2
About National Heritage Week	4
What is Heritage at Risk?	6
EVENT IDEAS	9
Heritage at Risk	9
Exploring Your Community	12
Sustainability & Climate	15
Inclusivity & Community	18
Wild Child Day	20
Water Heritage Day	24
National Heritage Week Awards	28
Heritage Open Doors	30
Tips from our award winning event organisers	32
How to promote your event	39
Sustainability checklist	41
Inclusivity checklist	44
Contacts	46



Message from the Chief Executive Officer of the Heritage Council Virginia Teehan

This Event Organisers' Handbook is designed to support you at every stage of planning, promoting and delivering your Heritage Week event. It offers practical guidance, helpful tips and key resources to ensure your event is accessible, engaging and successful.

The Heritage Council is committed to supporting the heritage sector through expert advice, partnerships and our grants programme, enabling communities and organisations to celebrate and protect Ireland's rich heritage. We hope this guide empowers you to create meaningful experiences that connect people with our shared past.

National Heritage Week continues to grow as a vibrant celebration of Ireland's diverse heritage, with thousands of events taking place across the country each year. This remarkable programme is made possible by the dedication of event organisers – volunteers, community groups, and local organisations – who bring creativity, passion and local knowledge to every event. Your contribution is at the heart of Heritage Week's success, helping to foster pride, participation and connection within communities. Thank you for playing such a vital role in making this national celebration possible.



MSOB
PERFORMING ARTS
SUMMER
2025

...D CAFE

Welcome to the 2026 Handbook for Event Organisers. This year, National Heritage Week will take place from 15th to 23rd August, inviting you to explore the theme **Heritage at Risk**.

The Heritage Council encourages you to create events and projects that reflect on the heritage places, practices, and natural environments that are under threat, and to consider how we can care for, protect, and sustain them for future generations.




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



Who is this booklet for?

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

How to get involved in National Heritage Week 2025

- 1**  Develop an event from the ideas in this list or plan your own unique event or project.
- 2**  Visit heritageweek.ie for helpful tips and resources to help bring your idea to life!
- 3**  Register your event or project on heritageweek.ie

What is Heritage at Risk?

The 2026 theme for National Heritage Week is Heritage at Risk. While it's not necessary to include the theme in your National Heritage Week event, often the theme can inspire us to look at our heritage in a different way.

What often comes to mind when thinking about Heritage at Risk are aspects like climate. Increased threats such as coastal erosion, flooding, biodiversity loss and damage to historic structures are some things that should be highlighted but that is only one part of the picture. Heritage can also be at risk in less visible but equally significant ways.

Cultural traditions may fade as practices are no longer passed between generations, languages and local knowledge can be lost, and archival materials – from photographs to manuscripts – face deterioration or destruction if they are not actively preserved. Together, these challenges highlight the need to think broadly about what we value and how it can be protected.

This theme encourages a deeper look at the elements of our heritage – built, natural and

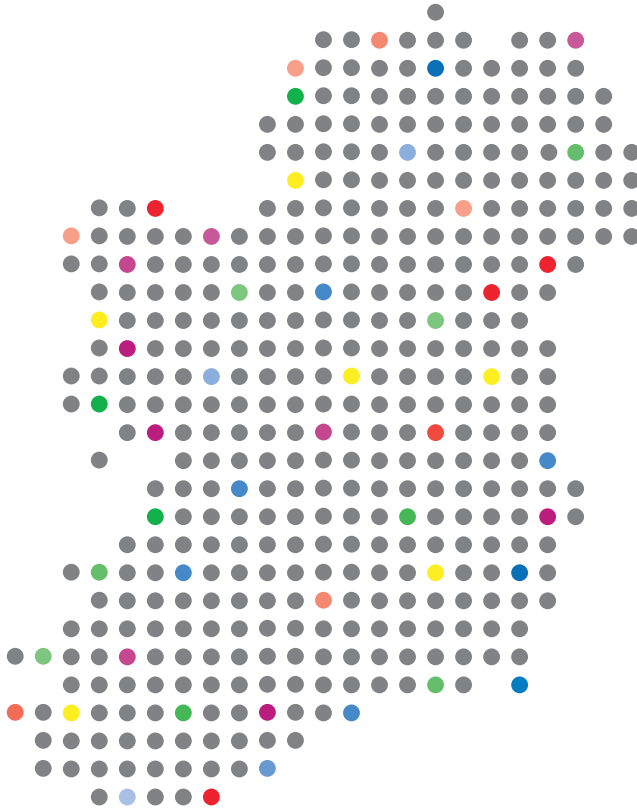


cultural – that are under threat. It asks us to consider not only what is at risk, but also how communities can respond through awareness, care and collective action.

For event organisers, this offers a wide range of creative possibilities. You might focus on endangered buildings or archaeological sites through guided tours, talks or exhibitions. Traditional skills such as thatching, stone masonry or blacksmithing can be explored through demonstrations and workshops, showing how these practices contribute to safeguarding heritage. Events could also highlight intangible cultural heritage – such as oral histories, folklore, traditional crafts, games and pastimes – helping to keep these living traditions visible and valued.

The theme also extends to natural heritage, with opportunities to highlight habitats and landscapes at risk through walks, citizen science or educational activities. By interpreting the theme locally, your event can raise awareness, inspire action and celebrate the value of heritage in a changing world.





Every year, RTÉ supports more than 160 arts events nationwide.

Apply Now: www.rte.ie/supportingthearts

EVENT IDEAS

HERITAGE AT RISK



Buildings at Risk Open Day

Are there historic buildings in your area facing challenges? Organise an open day, talk, or display to explore why these buildings matter, the pressures they face, and the conservation work helping to secure their future.

Lost Places Exhibition

Many places change before they are fully recorded. Create an exhibition exploring buildings, landscapes, or community spaces that have altered over time, encouraging reflection on documentation, care, and future awareness.



Recording Memories Before They're Lost

Much heritage exists in people's memories. Invite community members to record oral histories and lived experiences, helping to pass knowledge on to future generations.

Endangered Traditions Workshop

Some local crafts, skills, or traditions are now practised by fewer people. Host a demonstration or workshop celebrating these traditions and those who continue to share them.

Climate Change & Heritage Talk

Climate change presents growing challenges for heritage. Organise a talk exploring how flooding, erosion, or extreme weather affect local buildings, landscapes, and traditions, and how communities are responding.

Adopt a Monument Day

Some monuments and archaeological sites benefit from local care and attention. Explore how communities can support and look after nearby sites.

Vanishing Landscapes Walk

Changes in land use, development, and farming practices shape our surroundings. Explore landscapes under pressure using maps and local knowledge.

What We Nearly Lost

Some heritage survives today because action was taken. Share stories of buildings, sites, or traditions that were protected through timely intervention.

Heritage Rescue Stories

Highlight examples where heritage faced challenges but was successfully conserved or restored, exploring the work involved and lessons learned.



Archiving the Present

Everyday life today becomes tomorrow's heritage. Explore practical ways to document photographs, stories, objects, or digital material for the future.

At Risk Archives Open Day

Local records, photographs, and documents require active care. Host an event highlighting archives and simple actions that help protect them.

At Risk Graveyards Recording Day

Historic graveyards require ongoing attention. Organise a recording event to capture inscriptions and layouts as part of caring for these spaces.

Emergency Heritage Planning Workshop

Events such as storms or flooding can impact heritage. Explore how communities can prepare for and respond to emergencies.

EXPLORING YOUR COMMUNITY



Neighbourhood Memory Walk

As communities change, shared stories help build connections. Organise a walk where residents share personal stories linked to local places.

Street Names & Stories

Place names hold layers of meaning. Explore the origins of local street or townland names and their significance within the community.

Community History Speed Talks

Local knowledge is often informal. Invite short talks that encourage sharing and recording local insights.

Your Community in Ten Objects

Create an exhibition capturing aspects of community life through everyday objects that tell meaningful stories.



Mapping What Matters

Places that matter to people are not always formally recognised. Create a shared map identifying meaningful locations and discussing their care.

Working Lives Project

Forms of work change over time. Record memories and stories that reflect local working lives.

Historic Businesses Spotlight

Long-established businesses play an important role in community life. Celebrate their history and contribution.

Everyday Heritage Photo Walk

Ordinary places shape daily life. Encourage participants to photograph local environments and shared spaces.



Community Timeline

Community history is made up of many moments. Create a shared timeline bringing together memories and events.

Postcards from the Past

Historic images show how places evolve. Use postcards to reflect on change and continuity.

Disappearing Soundscapes

Everyday sounds shape our experience of place. Invite people to record or discuss local soundscapes.

Heritage at Risk Photography Project

Invite participants to photograph heritage sites that are vulnerable and valued.



SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE



Heritage Skills for Today

Traditional skills continue to inform sustainable living. Explore repair and reuse knowledge that supports heritage care.

Climate Change: Then & Now

Environmental knowledge has been passed down through generations. Compare historic records with present-day realities.

Low Carbon Heritage Event

Event planning can support sustainability. Explore ways heritage events can reduce environmental impact.

Traditional Building Materials Talk

Historic construction knowledge remains vital. Explore traditional materials and methods used in conservation.



Seasonal Food Through Time

Food traditions reflect local knowledge. Explore seasonal eating practices from the past and present.

Walking for Heritage

Low-impact travel supports heritage care. Encourage walking as a way to experience local places.

Heritage Gardens for Biodiversity

Gardens and orchards support biodiversity. Explore planting traditions that benefit the environment.

Water & Climate Memories

Community knowledge of weather and water supports resilience. Record memories that inform future understanding.





From Waste to Resource

Repair cultures demonstrate sustainable practice. Explore older approaches to reuse and care.

Learning from the Past

Past practices offer valuable insights. Explore how they can support heritage facing modern challenges.

Changing Coastlines Talk or Walk

Coastal heritage continues to change. Explore landscapes and traditions shaped by the coast.

Changing Farming Landscapes

Farming practices influence historic landscapes. Discuss change and continuity in rural environments.

INCLUSIVITY & COMMUNITY



Everyone's Heritage Day

Shared storytelling strengthens understanding. Create space for diverse voices and experiences.

New Communities, Shared Stories

Communities evolve over time. Explore how new residents contribute to living heritage.

Accessible Heritage Walk

Inclusive access allows wider engagement. Design ways for more people to experience heritage.

Languages of the Community

Languages shape identity and culture. Celebrate those spoken locally.



Memory Café

Relaxed settings encourage sharing. Create opportunities for people to tell their stories.

Intergenerational Exchange

Connections across generations support knowledge sharing. Bring people together to exchange experiences.

Belonging & Place

Explore what helps people feel connected to where they live.

Shared Celebrations

Celebrations reflect community values. Explore their histories and ongoing importance.

Community Heirlooms

Objects carry stories. Share items that reflect personal and community history.

Music as Heritage

Music thrives through sharing. Celebrate songs and tunes passed between generations.

Forgotten Skills Recording Session

Some skills are held by a small number of people. Record demonstrations and knowledge.



WILD CHILD DAY



Nature Detectives

Exploration builds appreciation. Encourage children to discover and value local nature.

Minibeast Hotel Workshop

Small actions can support habitats. Teach children how to help insects thrive.

Outdoor Storytime

Stories are shaped by place. Share storytelling in outdoor settings.

Junior Trail Makers

Paths tell stories. Teach children how routes were created and cared for.

Seeds & Stories

Growing traditions tell cultural stories. Explore seed heritage together.

Build with Nature

Creative play builds connection. Use natural materials for imaginative building.

Birdsong Discovery Walk

Listening builds awareness. Learn to recognise local birds and sounds.



Games from the Past

Traditional play reflects social life. Reintroduce outdoor games from earlier generations.

Wild Art Gallery

Nature inspires creativity. Encourage making art using natural materials.

Young Explorers' Journals

Observation helps understanding. Encourage children to record discoveries.

Transport Heritage at Risk

Routes and crossings shape movement. Explore them with children.



Wild Child Day

Discover the Natural World Around You

Saturday 22nd August 2026



Wild Child Day encourages children and young people all over Ireland to get outside and explore our natural heritage.

The Heritage Council is encouraging children to look at the world around them differently, to open their eyes to the diverse beauty of the landscape in their area and to get out and explore their locality or even farther afield.

This Wild Child Day, explore your local natural landscapes, learn about how we interact with nature and how we can create a sustainable environment for all flora and fauna.

Find all events for Wild Child Day 2026 at [heritageweek.ie](https://www.heritageweek.ie)

WATER HERITAGE DAY



Life Along the River

Rivers shape settlement and activity. Explore how water influences daily life.

Bridges & Crossings Walk

Crossings connect communities. Explore their history and role in the landscape.

Water in Place Names

Place names reveal history. Investigate water-related names locally.

Traditional Water-Based Livelihoods

Water shaped work and trade. Explore fishing and milling traditions.

Sacred Waters

Water holds cultural meaning. Explore beliefs and traditions linked to it.

Children's River Discovery Day

Early engagement fosters care. Help children explore waterways.

Living with Flooding

Shared experiences inform resilience. Record stories of adapting to flooding.





Wetlands Walk

Wetlands support life and heritage. Explore their landscapes and stories.

Rivers on Old Maps

Maps show how waterways were understood. Explore historic representations.

Poetry by the Water

Creative expression deepens connection. Capture responses inspired by water.

Digital Heritage at Risk

Digital material requires care. Explore ways to preserve water-related heritage.

Water Heritage Day

Explore the Waterways of Ireland

Sunday 23rd August 2026



Our landscape is full of waterways and features. Many are obvious to us while some waterways are hidden from plain sight. Water Heritage Day on 23rd August will celebrate the heritage and history connected to our magnificent rivers, lakes, and coastline and more. This water-themed day is organised through collaboration between the Heritage Council and the Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO).

This National Heritage Week, you can get involved and explore your local water body. Discover its biodiversity, participate in events or in citizen science projects that record and monitor waterways in your locality.

Celebrate the theme of Living Heritage by exploring our interaction with water and the traditions associated with it.

Find Water Heritage Day events
or projects in your community at
heritageweek.ie

Local Authority 
Waters
Programme

vibrant communities | catchment assessment | healthy waters



National Heritage Week Awards

The National Heritage Week Awards recognise the creativity, dedication and impact of event organisers across Ireland. Run by The Heritage Council, the awards celebrate the most engaging and inspiring projects delivered as part of National Heritage Week, shining a spotlight on the communities, organisations and volunteers who bring Ireland's heritage to life each year.

Awards Categories

Open to all registered National Heritage Week events, the awards are designed to acknowledge excellence across a wide range of themes and event types. Categories typically include awards for sustainability and climate action, inclusion and accessibility, Irish language promotion, water heritage, family-focused programming, and living or intangible cultural heritage. A dedicated County Award is also presented in each local authority area, offering local recognition alongside national honours.

Heritage Hero

In addition to event-based awards, the popular Heritage Hero Award recognises an individual or organisation that has made an outstanding long-term contribution to protecting and promoting heritage in Ireland. This category is nominated by the public, giving communities an opportunity to champion the people and groups making a real difference.

How to Enter

Entering the awards is a valuable opportunity for organisers to showcase the impact of their event, gain national visibility, and celebrate the hard work involved in planning and delivery. Applications typically require a short submission outlining the event, its aims, audience engagement, and supporting materials such as photographs or feedback.

Whether your project explores local history, biodiversity, architecture, folklore, crafts or community traditions, the National Heritage Week Awards provide an opportunity to have your efforts recognised at both county and national level.

Winners and shortlisted organisers are celebrated at an annual awards ceremony, bringing together some of the most innovative and passionate heritage champions in the country. Make sure to consider entering the Awards as part of your event planning process and to document activities throughout the week to support a strong submission. Submissions for the 2026 National Heritage Week Awards will open at the end of August 2026 via [heritageweek.ie](https://www.heritageweek.ie).





Heritage Open Doors

Unlock the
Stories Behind
Your Building

Ever wondered what's behind the doors of that old courthouse, lodge, or historic house in your town? Heritage Open Doors is all about satisfying that curiosity. Taking place on 15th August, at the start of National Heritage Week, this initiative invites building owners and custodians to open up spaces that aren't usually accessible to the public.

What is Heritage Open Doors

At its heart, Heritage Open Doors is a simple but powerful idea: give people the chance to step inside Ireland's built heritage and hear the stories that bring these places to life. From grand landmark buildings to lesser-known local gems,

visitors can explore spaces they might otherwise only pass by. That could include historic houses, thatched cottages, libraries, civic buildings, places of worship, schools, or even working buildings with a story to tell—any building with its own heritage and character. Many events include free entry, guided tours, or informal talks, making it easy for people of all ages to get involved.

Taking Part

Getting involved is straightforward. If you own or are the custodian of a historic building, big or small, you can take part by hosting an event on 15th August. That could be as simple as opening your doors for a few hours, offering a short tour, or sharing insights into the building's history, architecture, or current use. You don't need a huge programme or a big event, what matters is giving people access and a sense of connection to the place.

To take part, register your event through the National Heritage Week website and select the Heritage Open Doors option. Once listed, your event

becomes part of a nationwide celebration that encourages people to discover new places and see familiar ones in a different light.

In short: **if you've got a door, open it. You never know who might be curious enough to step inside.**



Tips from our award-winning event organisers



If you're thinking of organising a National Heritage Week event but are not sure where to start, don't worry, you're not alone! To give you a helping hand (and maybe a little inspiration), we caught up with a couple of last year's award-winning event organisers to hear how they did it. Whether you're planning something big or small, indoors or out, there's plenty of wisdom (and a few fun surprises) in these tips.



The Maigue Rivers Trust

The Maigue Rivers Trust organised a number of events along the Maigue river in Co. Limerick for National Heritage Week in 2025. The events included bat walks, tree walks and talks. Their event for Wild Child Day was nominated and won the Wild Child Day Award at the National Heritage Week Awards 2025. Here project officer Christine Reidy shares some tips from organising that event in 2025.

Where did you get the idea for your event?

So I loved the concept of Wild Child Day, being a mum to a (then) 8-year-old and a 3-year-old. I wanted to do something around that. I was on a Farm Walk, organised by Limerick's Biodiversity Officer Sinéad McDonnell, and the farmer had built an Otter Holt. It looked amazing, and it set me thinking about doing a Wild Child Day centred around otters and building a holt.



How did you plan and run your event?

Once I had the idea for a theme, I wanted to find a venue that felt 'wild' yet was accessible and had facilities. On chatting to Brian Collopy at Lough Gur, I discovered Lough Gur does indeed have otters, so this seemed like a great venue which offered facilities whilst feeling wild and full of heritage. I then planned the event with Brian and session leader Albert Nolan.

What do you think makes a good National Heritage Week event?

Something that connects with the intended audience and is a bit different.

What are the things that an event organiser should think about?

How the event will be formatted, who will lead the event, and, of course, are there toilets!

How did you promote your event?

We promoted the event on our social media, through Limerick networks, and then I think lots of people came through the Heritage Council's own Heritage Week promotion.

Mealagh Valley “Voice from the Valley”

For their National Heritage Week 2025 event Mealagh Valley Community Centre in Co. Cork organised the Mealagh Valley Heritage Day: A free, family friendly event which brought together the whole community, to engage in the rich heritage of the valley. The event included the screening of the documentary “Voices of the Valley” about the history and heritage of the area along with talks and fun activities on biodiversity, heritage crafts, nature art, archaeology, local set

dancing and traditional music. The event was the winner of the Inclusivity Award at the National Heritage Week Awards in October 2025. Here Elanor Fitzgerald shares tips they learned from that event.

Where did you get the idea for your event?

Our event grew from being centred around the launch of our oral history documentary film, “Voices of the Valley”. We then brainstormed up ideas for engaging and inclusive presentations to stack around the main attraction of the movie.



How did you plan and run your event?

We used our local community hall with great amenities and parking. Group members then took on specific tasks: e.g. promotions, practical set up and displays, liaising with speakers and running order, managing refreshments, parking and crowd marshalling.

What do you think makes a good National Heritage Week event?

Attention to inclusivity is central. We worked hard before and, on the day, to ensure all cohorts and broad interests were provided for: e.g. young and old, local and new, and special needs. Our group members were circulating on the day with a warm welcome, engaging and encouraging interaction between participants. Briefing volunteers well beforehand, with clear responsibilities, and keeping an eye on proceedings to support participation and enjoyment.

What are the things that an event organiser should think about?

The flow and pace of the event needs an adaptable attitude. Ways to maintain interest, with volunteers ensuring genuine engagement and interaction. Providing access to quieter area if needed. Plan for how to put a smile on everybody's face, including the organisers!

How did you promote your event?

We have hyperlocal social media channels with WhatsApp and Facebook noticeboards. Our local newspaper is widely read with older community members. We believe word of mouth is also crucial, so making the time and effort to speak and invite in person. Our documentary also brought interest from local radio, an interview before the event was well received.

Milltown Heritage Group Event

For National Heritage Week 2025, Milltown Heritage Group organised a range of events within the community. These included a collaboration with a local school, an open day at the group's museum, and a special event exploring the archaeology of the N17 road project.



Where did you get the idea for your event?

The idea for our event came directly from an invitation from heritage professional Jerry O'Sullivan, TII Archaeologist. Jerry was keen to deliver a talk as part of National Heritage Week on the archaeology of medieval and early modern farming along the N17 Milltown to Gortnagunne road project in Co. Galway. He also invited us, along with our local schools, to visit the excavation site and view the findings.

This invitation became the starting point for the event. The National Heritage Week 2025 theme, Exploring Our Foundations, tied in particularly well with the subject matter.

Our heritage group had also previously worked with Belmont and Milltown National Schools on a natural heritage project, which featured in the Our Irish Natural Heritage exhibition as part of the Irish Community Archive Network (iCAN). This exhibition is currently on display at the National Museum of Ireland, Collins Barracks, until May 2026.

Although the event took place during the school holidays, we invited local children to participate by playing music on the day, alongside screenings of short films recorded in our local heritage park.

How did you plan and run your event?

We began by assessing the venue and the available space, along with practical considerations such as sound and seating. We then sourced

volunteers who were willing to assist with the logistics, including setting up chairs, organising refreshments, preparing the projector, and coordinating the young musicians.

We also organised a team to provide guided tours of our local museum. Having individuals take ownership of specific roles helped ensure that the day ran smoothly.

What do you think makes a good National Heritage Week event?

We have found that intergenerational events work particularly well. Bringing together different age groups enhances the experience and often leads to unexpected and meaningful conversations.

Very often, an event sparks something new: someone may share a personal story, or we may uncover information we had not previously come across.

What should an event organiser think about?

Timing is crucial, as is choosing the right location. Outdoor events can present additional challenges, so it is important to plan accordingly.

Maximising audience engagement is also key. In our case, the children's involvement in the music encouraged parents and grandparents to attend, while the short films from our local heritage park were a strong draw for the audience.

How did you promote your event?

We promoted the event through our community heritage website, Facebook and Instagram pages, our local parish newsletter, and the Tuam Herald local notes. Posters were also displayed throughout the local area.

We find the resources available on the National Heritage Week website very helpful. The QR code competition worked particularly well for us in Milltown last year.

The digital events are a great addition—they help showcase the work being done and give it a much wider reach.

8 Tips from the Chair of the Heritage Officer Network



Below Conor Nelligan, Heritage Officer for Cork County and Chair of the Local Authority Heritage Officer Network, offers some tips and advice on organising a successful Heritage Week event!

- H** Heritage is for all of us. Make every effort to let everyone in your community know about the event; word of mouth remains one of the best formats!
- E** Early advertising of your event on www.heritageweek.ie allows for a much greater lead-in time, leading to more promotion of the event and heightened anticipation.
- R** Regardless of whether it is 100 people or 1 person that turns up, the record shows that you held a National Heritage Week event, something to be proud of, and it is our pride in our heritage that sustains us all.
- I** Irish is an important part of our heritage. Déan iarracht é a labhairt / úsáid i do chuid eachtra.
- T** Try to ensure that your event has a lasting legacy; this could be through simple image capture, videography, etc.
- A** As not everyone uses GPS or Sat-Nav, in addition to providing the Eircode for the event, be sure that it is well signposted along the lead-up road(s).
- G** Give consideration to supporting other National Heritage Week events in your locality and ensure events do not clash where possible.
- E** Enjoy National Heritage Week!

How to promote your National Heritage Week event



by Sabrina D'Angelo, Junior Account Manager, Q4PR

To promote your National Heritage Week event effectively, relying on two key elements is recommended - clear messaging and the strategic use of local and digital media.

A few practical steps can significantly increase visibility and public participation.

Local media (print, broadcast and online) play a central role in event promotion. These outlets have a significant local audience, are widely trusted and community focused, and are receptive to news about local events, particularly those that have broad appeal and have either no or little cost or commercial motivation.

News items and stories that resonate most with local media are timely, locally relevant and community centred.

Before drafting communications, organisers should define the key messages they want to communicate about their event to the public, using simple language.

A well structured press release should be created which answers questions interested members of the public may have, such as:

- What the event is
- Who it is aimed at / Who will enjoy it
- Where it is
- When it is - date and time
- If it is free or if there is a cost associated

As well as the previous information, a headline with key information and a short quote from an organiser is also recommended. This forms the basis of a Press Release.

Emphasising inclusivity and accessibility is particularly important.

It's recommended to email the press release to the media outlet in the body of an email rather than as an attachment, and to provide contact details in case they wish to follow up with a question.

Finding the right journalist is an important step. Local newspapers often list contacts in print/online. If in doubt – you can always call the outlet.

Creating your own 'Facebook Event' for your event complements media outreach by providing a simple way to share details, updates and build interest.



National Heritage Week Event Sustainability Checklist



By using this checklist, you can help to ensure that your National Heritage Week event incorporates sustainability into every aspect of the process, from venue selection to waste reduction. By promoting sustainable practices, you can help to create a more environmentally friendly event and promote sustainable behaviour among attendees.

Sustainable venues and suppliers

- Check venue or supplier environmental management system
- Discuss sustainability requirements with venues and suppliers before booking

Outdoor events

- Check sensitivities of your site and plan accordingly
- Apply principles of Leave No Trace to all event planning, operation and clean-up

Sustainable transport

- Organise event in a location accessible by active travel or public transport
- Actively encourage attendees to use public transport, cycling, or walking to the event
- Provide shuttle transport or carpooling for more remote locations
- Work with local suppliers to reduce transportation emissions and promote local businesses

Waste reduction

- Use online event promotion and booking to reduce printing
- If printing is required, use certified recycled paper
- Provide clearly labelled bins for recycling, compost, and landfill waste
- Avoid single-use items such as plastic or paper cups - request reusable cups for tea and coffee

- Avoid bottled water – request jugs of water and encourage attendees to bring reusable water bottles
- Avoid plastic promotional items, particularly those that may cause pollution (e.g. balloons)

Food

- Use seasonal, locally sourced food
- Ensure vegetarian and vegan options are available
- Use sustainable products (compostable straws, recyclable napkins, reusable plates and cutlery)
- Choose suppliers who use sustainable practices and materials

Sustainable energy

- Choose a venue with an energy reduction policy (efficient use of heating, lighting etc)
- If generators are needed, plan to reduce fuel use, ensure the right size generator is used
- For AV or IT check supplier policies on energy reduction - request energy efficient equipment

Water

- Ensure your venue promotes water conservation and encourage attendees to reduce water use
- Provide water dispensers or refill stations and encourage the use of reusable water bottles
- Ensure that water used for cleaning and other purposes is collected and reused if possible
- Avoid activities that could harm water quality, such as using harsh chemicals for cleaning or releasing balloons or other litter that could end up in waterways
- Communicate your commitment to water conservation and sustainability to attendees
- Work with local environmental organisations to identify ways to support water conservation efforts

Biodiversity

- Consider holding part of your event outdoors and promoting the importance of biodiversity
- Choose a venue that has a positive impact on local wildlife - ask for venue policy on biodiversity
- Consider adding elements to your event to improve biodiversity, eg planting native trees
- Invite local biodiversity conservation groups to partner with you in delivering a conservation positive message to your attendees
- Plan ahead to address any potential for your event to contribute to spread of invasive species

Communications and engagement

- Promote event online using website and social media as far as possible
- Make online booking and feedback forms available
- Ensure promotional products are used only if absolutely necessary
- Ensure any promotional products, prizes, gifts etc are environmentally friendly and sustainably produced (reduce plastic, use reusable, recycled and recyclable materials where possible)
- Inform attendees about the importance of sustainability and how you are trying to reduce the climate and environmental impact of your National Heritage Week event
- Ask for feedback and suggestions for how you can improve the sustainability of future events
- Provide information for attendees on sustainable practices and how to be more climate aware in their daily lives
- Incorporate messages about climate action and biodiversity loss into all events
- The organising team should meet shortly afterwards to review the event and identify lessons learnt that will prove valuable for future events

National Heritage Week Event Inclusivity Checklist



Use this checklist to ensure your event is inclusive, accessible, and welcoming for all attendees. Tick off each item as you complete it.

Participation

- Have I encouraged as many people as possible to join?
- Have I identified and removed potential barriers to participation?

Consider Different Perspectives

- Have I considered the perspectives of different attendees?
- Have I identified who is missing from my event and how to include them?

The Right Invitation

- Is my invitation reaching diverse groups?
- Is the messaging welcoming and inclusive?

Information Powers Inclusivity

- Have I provided clear details about the event?
- Do attendees know what to expect?

Accessibility

- Is the venue step-free and wheelchair accessible?
- Are there enough seats available?
- Are lighting conditions appropriate?
- Will the speaker/s be clearly visible?
- Is the sound adequate for all attendees?
- Have I asked attendees about necessary accommodations?

Additional Considerations

- Is the event scheduled at a suitable time for different groups?
- Is there clear signage and information available at the venue?
- Have I ensured wheelchair accessibility at all key points?
- Have I consulted relevant charities or representative groups for inclusivity advice?

Communication & Content

- Am I using inclusive language?
- Is the content accessible and easy to understand?
- Have I considered different formats (visual, verbal, etc.) for presenting information?

Final Steps for Inclusivity

- Have I identified groups I want to include and reached out to them?
- Have I made personal invitations to encourage participation?
- Have I consulted organisations for insights on inclusivity?
- Have I made necessary practical adjustments based on feedback?



Local Authority Heritage and Biodiversity Officers

Included below is a contact list for our Heritage and Biodiversity Officers throughout the country who are on hand to assist you with any queries you might have about organising an event. From practical advice, to supplying merchandise, to providing resources or helping you to make connections with key players on the ground in your local area, they are an invaluable source of support as you plan your event.

Heritage Officers

Local Authority	Heritage Officer	Telephone	Email
Carlow County Council	Dr Eoin Sullivan	059 9129705	esullivan@carlowcoco.ie
Cavan County Council	Anne-Marie Ward	049 437 8300	amcurley@cavancoco.ie
Clare County Council	John Treacy	065 6846457	cmcguire@clarecoco.ie
Cork City Council	Niamh Twomey	021 492 4018	niamh_twomey@corkcity.ie
Cork County Council	Conor Nelligan	021 428 5905	conor.nelligan@corkcoco.ie
Donegal County Council	Dr Joe Gallagher	074 917 2576	j.gallagher@donegalcoco.ie
Dublin City Council	Charles Duggan	01 222 2856	charles.duggan@dublincity.ie
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council	Deirdre Black	01 2054700	dblack@drlrcoco.ie

Local Authority	Heritage Officer	Telephone	Email
Fingal County Council	Christine Baker	01-890 5691	christine.baker@fingal.ie
Galway City Council	Jim Higgins	091 526 574	jim.higgins@galwaycity.ie
Galway County Council	Marie Mannion	091 509 198	mmannion@galwaycoco.ie
Kerry County Council	Victoria McCarthy	066 7183582	VMcCarthy@kerrycoco.ie
Kildare County Council	Dara Wyer	045 980563	dwyer@kildarecoco.ie
Kilkenny County Council	Regina Fitzpatrick	056 779 4923	regina.fitzpatrick@kilkennycoco.ie
Laois County Council	Thomas Carolan	057 8664129	tcarolan@laoiscoco.ie
Leitrim County Council	Sarah Malone	071 9620005	smalone@leitrimcoco.ie
Limerick City and County Council	Tom O'Neill	061 557229	thomas.oneill@limerick.ie
Longford County Council	Máiréad Ní Chonghaile	043 334 0731 / 334 1124	mnichonghaile@longfordcoco.ie
Louth County Council	Brendan McSherry	042 9392969	brendan.mcsherry@louthcoco.ie
Mayo County Council	Dr Deirdre Cunningham	094 906 4092	dcunningham@mayococo.ie
Meath County Council	Dr Loreto Guinan	046 909 7507 / 909 7500	lguinan@meathcoco.ie
Monaghan County Council	Kara Ward	047 73722	kara.ward@monaghancoco.ie
Offaly County Council	Amanda Pedlow	086 8530350	apedlow@offalycoco.ie

Local Authority	Heritage Officer	Telephone	Email
Roscommon County Council	Nollaig Feeney	090 663 7100 / 663 7135	nollaig.feeney@roscommoncoco.ie
Sligo County Council	Siobhán Ryan	071 911 4482 / 9111 111	sryan@sligococo.ie
South Dublin County Council	Dr Rosaleen Dwyer	01 414 9222 / 414 9000	rdwyer@sdblincoco.ie
Tipperary County Council	Roisin O'Grady	076 106 6213	roisin.ogrady@tipperarycoco.ie
Waterford County Council	Bernadette Guest	051 849 668	bguest@waterfordcouncil.ie
Westmeath County Council	Melanie McQuade	044 9332098 / 087 6074496	melanie.mcquade@westmeathcoco.ie
Wexford County Council	Colm Moriarty	053-9196137	colm.moriarty@wexfordcoco.ie
Wicklow County Council	Deirdre Burns	0404 20100 / 20191	dburns@wicklowcoco.ie

Biodiversity Officers

Local Authority	Biodiversity Officer	Telephone	Email
Carlow County Council	Shane Casey	059 9136250	scasey@carlowcoco.ie
Cavan County Council	Naomi Mitten	049 4378300	nmitten@cavancoco.ie
Clare County Council	Barry O'Loughlin	065 6846232	boloughlin@clarecoco.ie
Cork City Council	Rosemarie McDonald	021 4924000	rosemarie_mcdonald@corkcity.ie
Cork City Council	Usna Keating	021 4924000	usna_keating@corkcity.ie

Local Authority	Biodiversity Officer	Telephone	Email
Cork County Council	Alan McCarthy	021 4285575	alan.mccarthy@corkcoco.ie
Donegal County Council	Julie Corry	087 3430534	juliecorry@donegalcoco.ie
Dublin City Council	Astrid Lynn	01 222 5278	biodiversity@dublincity.ie
Dublin City Council	Kelly Mara	01 222 5278	biodiversity@dublincity.ie
Dublin City Council	Pauhla McGrane	01 222 5278	biodiversity@dublincity.ie
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council	Anne Murray	01 205 4700	annemurray@dlrcoco.ie
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council	Martina O'Brien	01 205 4700	martinaobrien@dlrcoco.ie
Fingal County Council	Lorraine Bull	01 890 5000	lorraine.Bull@fingal.ie
Fingal County Council	Hans Visser	01 890 5000	Hans.Visser@fingal.ie
Galway City Council	David McNicholas	087 4261726	david.mcnicholas@galwaycity.ie
Galway County Council	Rosina Joyce	091 509000	rjoyce@galwaycoco.ie
Kerry County Council	Eleanor Turner	066 7183848	eleanor.turner@kerrycoco.ie
Kildare County Council	Meabh Boylan	045 980761	mboylan@kildarecoco.ie
Kilkenny County Council	Bernadette Moloney	056 7794487	bernadette.moloney@kilkennycoco.ie
Laois County Council	Lisa Doyle		ldoyle@laoiscoco.ie

Local Authority	Biodiversity Officer	Telephone	Email
Leitrim County Council	Rebecca Cogan	(071) 9620005	rcogan@leitrimcoco.ie
Limerick City and County Council	Sinead McDonnell	061 557108	sinead.mcdonnell@limerick.ie
Longford County Council	Adam Mulvihill	043 334 3300	amulvihill@longfordcoco.ie
Louth County Council	Helen Hanratty		helen.hanratty@louthcoco.ie
Mayo County Council	Sheila Murphy		sheilamurphy@MayoCoCo.ie
Meath County Council	Ben Malone	046-9097000	bmalone@meathcoco.ie
Monaghan County Council	Patricia McCreesh		patricia.mccreesh@monaghancoco.ie
Offaly County Council	Ricky Whelan	057 8664000	rwhelan@offalycoco.ie
Roscommon County Council	Gerard Hannon		ghannon@roscommoncoco.ie
Sligo County Council	Ruth Hanniffy	071 911 4480	rhanniffy@sligococo.ie
Tipperary County Council	Ann Marie Fleming		annmarie.fleming@tipperarycoco.ie
Waterford County Council	In recruitment		
Westmeath County Council	Christina Sweeney	044-9332000	Christina.Sweeney@westmeathcoco.ie
Wexford County Council	Claire Goodwin		claire.goodwin@wexfordcoco.ie
Wicklow County Council	Hannah O'Kelly		hokelly@wicklowcoco.ie





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



European Heritage Days
Journées européennes
du patrimoine



Fáilte
Ireland



OPW

Local Authority
Waters Programme
vibrant communities | catchment assessment | healthy waters



Irish
Landmark
Trust
save • share • sustain



Rialtas Áitiúil Éireann
Local Government Ireland



Ceangal
Clár den Chomhairle Oidhreachta
A Heritage Council programme



An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council



National
Heritage Week

A **Heritage Council** programme

heritageweek.ie