Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Heritage Ireland 2030

Summit Report 2023

Prepared by the Department of
Housing, Local Government and Heritage
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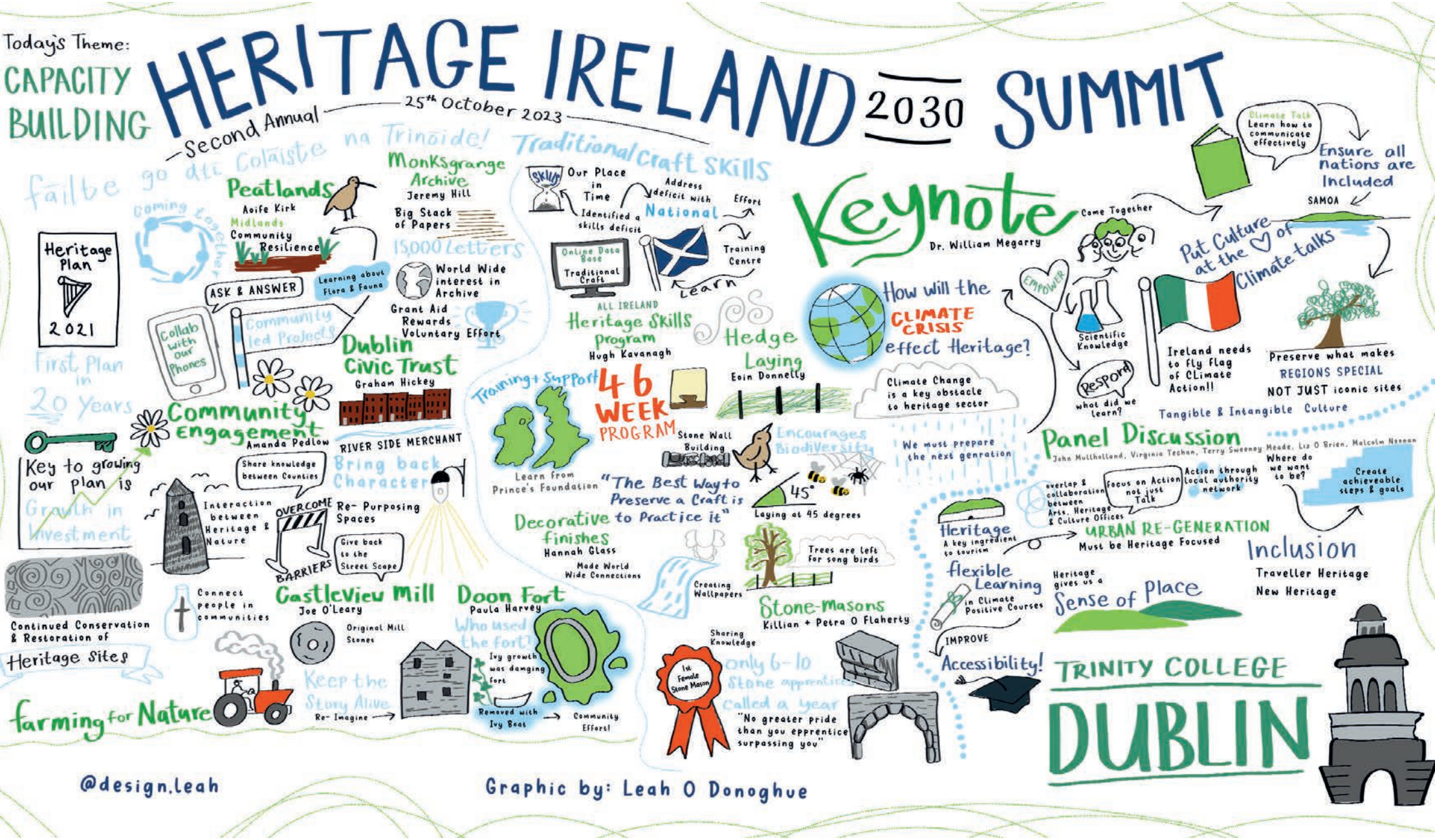
Today's Theme:
CAPACITY BUILDING
HERITAGE IRELAND 2030 SUMMIT
Second Annual
25th October 2023
Keynote
Dr. William Megarry
How will the CLIMATE CRISIS effect Heritage?
Climate Change is a key obstacle to heritage sector
We must prepare the next genration
Panel Discussion
John Mulhelland, Virginia Teehan, Terry Sweeney Meade, Liz O Brien, Malcolm Noonan
Put Culture at the ♡ of Climate talks
Ireland needs to fly Flag of CLimate Action!!
Ensure all Nations are Included
SAMOA
Climate Talk
Learn how to communicate effectively
Come Together
EMPOWER
Scientific Knowledge
RESPOND
what did we learn?
Preserve what makes REGIONS SPECIAL
NOT JUST iconic sites
Tangible & Intangible Culture
Traditional Craft Skills
Our Place in Time
Identified a skills deficit
Address deficit with
National
Effort
Training Centre
Learn
Online Data Base
Traditional Craft
ALL IRELAND
Heritage Skills Program
Hugh Kavanagh
Hedge Laying
Eoin Donnelly
Training + Support
46 WEEK PROGRAM
Learn from Prince's Foundation
"The Best Way to Preserve a Craft is Decorative to Practice it"
Hannah Glass
Made World Wide Connections
Stone Wall Building
Encourages BioDiVersity
45°
Laying at 45 degrees
Trees are left for song birds
Creating Wallpapers
Stone-masons
Killian + Petra O Flaherty
Sharing Knowledge
1st Female Stone Mason
only 6-10 Stone apprentices called a year
"No greater pride than you epprentice surpassing you"
Heritage
A key ingredient to tourism
flexible Learning
in Climate Positive Courses
IMPROVE
Accessibility!
overlap & collaberation between Arts, Heritage & Culture Offices
Focus on Action not just Talk
Action through local authority network
URBAN RE-GENERATION
Must be Heritage Focused
Where do we want to be?
Create achieveable steps & goals
Inclusion
Traveller Heritage
New Heritage
Heritage gives us a Sense of Place
TRINITY COLLEGE
DUBLIN
Heritage Plan 2021
First Plan in 20 Years
Key to growing our plan is Growth in Investment
Community Engagement
Amanda Pedlow
Peatlands
Aoife Kirk
Midlands Community Resilience
Monksgrange Archive
Jeremy Hill
Big Stack of Papers
15,000 Letters
World Wide interest in Archive
Grant Aid
Rewards Voluntary Effort
Learning about Flora & Fauna
ASK & ANSWER
Collab with Our Phones
Community led Projects
Dublin Civic Trust
Graham Hickey
RIVER SIDE MERCHANT
Bring back Character
Re- Purposing Spaces
Give back to the Street Scape
Share knowledge between Counties
Interaction between Heritage & Nature
OVERCOME BARRIERS
Connect people in communities
Continued Conservation & Restoration of Heritage Sites
Castleview Mill
Joe O'Leary
Original Mill Stones
Keep the Story Alive
Re- Imagine
Doon Fort
Paula Harvey
Who used the fort?
Ivy growth was damging fort
Removed with Ivy Beat
Community Effort!
farming for Nature
@design.leah
Graphic by: Leah O Donoghue

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Executive Summary

Ireland's national heritage plan, Heritage Ireland 2030, is built around a vision of heritage – in all its forms – being at the very centre of local and national discourse, valued by all and cared for and protected for future generations.

At the heart of this framework are three themes: communities, leadership and partnerships. These themes reflect the importance of collaboration between government and communities, heritage organisations, individuals and local authorities in caring for Ireland's shared heritage.

As one of the commitments in the national heritage plan, an annual Summit brings together heritage stakeholders from the private and public sectors, from communities and interested public.

The Summit is an opportunity for engagement and discussions on the future of Ireland's heritage, to learn of various initiatives and projects and to meet with those involved and interested in the protection and promotion of Ireland's heritage. To facilitate wider participation, the Summit is also streamed online.

The 2023 Summit took place on 25 October in Trinity College Dublin. The Summit was built around 'Capacity Building in Heritage', a theme that had been strongly advocated by attendees at the previous year's Summit.

Moderated by broadcaster Mary Kennedy, the 2023 Summit included sessions on the need to harness and grow traditional heritage skills and the critical need to support this at national and local level.

The Summit offered opportunities between sessions for attendees to engage with leading heritage stakeholders who managed booths in the concourse providing information and advice about their organisations. To further celebrate the valuable work of local community groups in caring for heritage, poster presentations of various projects were displayed in the concourse.

Leah O'Donoghue, graphic artist, recorded each session throughout the day.

Opening Session

A short welcome address from moderator, broadcaster Mary Kennedy, provided background to the national heritage plan and the capacity building theme of the Summit. Referencing her own career in media, Mary Kennedy spoke of her own connection with Ireland's heritage and its ability to bring together local communities, stressing its importance for Irish identity.

Minister of State for Nature, Heritage and Electoral Reform, Malcolm Noonan, opened the Summit providing details of heritage supports announced in the recently published Budget 2024 and an update on the delivery and implementation of Heritage Ireland 2030:

- Heritage had been allocated €166 million in the recent Budget to support measures such as:
  - Further funding for the Climate and Nature Fund, the Heritage Council and capital grant schemes led by the National Monuments Service and National Built Heritage Service;
  - Continued transformation and renewal of the National Parks and Wildlife Service;
  - Provisions for a Masterplan for the new Brú na Bóinne National Park at Dowth;
  - Provision of support for the early implementation phases of the new Historic and Archaeological Heritage and Miscellaneous Provisions Act and;
  - Continued investment in delivery of Heritage Ireland 2030.
- A new dedicated webpage for Heritage Ireland 2030 featuring progress documents.
- A 2022 Summit Report and two corresponding Delivery Update Reports feature alongside other relevant documents to the plan on the webpage.
- A group of senior officials from various departments formed under the plan met twice in 2023, with work ongoing to create various working groups to further the delivery of the plan.
- A Heritage in Towns working group is set to convene its first meeting in Q1 2024.

On the capacity building theme of the Summit, Minister Noonan detailed initiatives underway to support and sustain heritage expertise, including:

- Expansion and improvement of current heritage grant scheme programmes run by the Heritage Council and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage;
- Investment in partnerships with educational institutions and professional associations;
- Investment in relevant European policies, such as the Erasmus-funded CHARTER project;
- Further professionalisation of local authority heritage services and support to the Local Authority Heritage Officer and Biodiversity Officer programmes;
- Further research on the feasibility of establishing traditional skills training centres and;
- Strong engagement with stakeholders across heritage, education and construction sectors.

The Minister concluded his opening address by emphasising the critical need in delivering this vision of Heritage Ireland 2030 to continue expanding and developing initiatives which support public involvement. The Minister acknowledged the important role of heritage stakeholders and the public in promoting and preserving Ireland's heritage.

Director General of the National Parks and Wildlife Service and Assistant Secretary for Heritage, Niall Ó Donnchú, further outlined the delivery of Heritage Ireland 2030, and the development of heritage resources and focus within the Department.

The Historic and Archaeological Heritage and Miscellaneous Provisions Act which had been recently signed into law at the time of the Summit, was singled out as a giant step forward for heritage. It was a transformative piece of legislation that will introduce a range of new provisions to provide for the greater protection and conservation of Ireland's historic heritage. Enactment of the legislation had been a key goal and action of Heritage Ireland 2030.

Session One –

Community Project Speakers

Communities are at the heart of the Heritage Ireland 2030 strategy, playing a vital role in protecting heritage and promoting its value. Session One showcased the valuable work being done by local heritage groups.

This session showcased six heritage projects from around the country that are recipients of various grant schemes by the Heritage Council and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The presentations encompassed the broad sphere of heritage – natural, built, archaeological and cultural. The community speakers detailed the challenges heritage groups have faced, the support they have received and the lessons they have learned.

1. The Heritage Officer Network and the Importance of Community Engagement

Opening the session, Heritage Officer for Offaly County Council and current Chair of the Heritage Officers Network, Amanda Pedlow, provided a general overview of the role of Heritage Officers in local authorities, the current developments of heritage recruitment and their engagement with local communities offering advice, liaising and providing assistance regarding funding schemes, training programmes and networking opportunities.

2. Castleview Mills, Clonakilty, Co Cork

Joe O' Leary introduced the origins of the Castleview Mill in Clonakilty, Co Cork as well as his ancestral links to the mill. The mill has undergone many restoration projects including renovation of the third floor loft, ivy removal, upkeep of the mill race and various structural repairs. These initiatives were carried out with funding from the Community Monuments Fund managed by the National Monuments Service. Joe spoke about future plans to use the mill for wellness, storytelling traditions and educational purposes.

3. Connecting Communities with Peatlands

Funded by the National Just Transition Fund, the project commenced in 2021 in partnership with the Community Wetlands Forum and Rural Link Ireland, operating across counties that have been impacted by the cessation of peat extraction. Project co-ordinator, Aoife Kirk, outlined the aim of the project, which is to increase community capacity and build community resilience in connection with peatlands. Since 2021, the project has produced guidelines for communities managing local wetlands and peatlands, hosted in-depth training days, study visits, building communities' knowledge of plant life and partnered with initiatives such as 'Leave No Trace Ireland' and the 'Irish Community Archive Network'. Aoife discussed the valuable work local communities have undertaken providing examples from Milltown Pass, Cloonlarge Bog and Clara Bog.

4. Dublin Civic Trust Conservation Project

Graham Hickey, CEO of Dublin Civic Trust, began by defining the objectives of the Trust which is to maintain, protect and draw focus to the urban heritage of Dublin City. Over the last 30 years, the group has actively tried to lead by demonstration in the act of acquisition of historic buildings which include but are not limited to merchant houses, aristocratic mansions and once-trading premises. Speaking about the group's current project at 18 Ormond Quay Upper, Graham detailed the conservation-led approach taken to restore. He also spoke of the challenges faced in restoring such buildings, emphasising that to protect Dublin's urban heritage traditional skills must not be lost.

5. The Monksgrange Archives Project

Jeremy Hill provided a brief background of the house and its rich history including the discovery of a collection of 15,000 letters, photographs, artworks, estate papers and more from the Richard-Orpen families. Following years of sorting, collating and listing the material alongside Philip Bull, the Monksgrange Archive was officially established in 2013. Jeremy outlined the archive's mission statement and its use for academic research, currently being reviewed by post graduates across 3 continents. In his final comments, Jeremy credited the Heritage Council's Community Grant Scheme which had enabled the acquisition of a museum grade map storage chest and conservation treatment to important documents in Paris. Wexford County Council also provided grant aid which enabled the archive to raise its profile and supported and improved its research opportunities

6. The Doon Fort Conservation Project

Paula Harvey, on behalf of Donegal GAP Heritage and History Group spoke about Doon Fort, the Group's main project since becoming a part of the Heritage Council's 'Adopt a Monument' Scheme in 2016. The aim of the project is to bring Doon Fort, its landscape setting and other monuments in the vicinity, into the heart of the community and to facilitate and encourage meaningful community participation. Paula spoke about the challenges that come with caring for this island fort and its surrounding area, including climate change, loss of biodiversity, invasive plant species and structural failure due to years of neglect. Over the course of 8 years, the community group have actively been raising awareness of the site and with the help of financial support from the Heritage Council and Donegal County Council, Creative Ireland, Local Authority Waters Programme, Community Monuments Fund and private donations has provided a means to preserve and conserve this monument. Paula spoke about the future steps of the project which is to continue the conservation efforts for the fort and to increase public accessibility to comply with the Adopt a Monument actions.

> *Ultimately the good health of our cultural, built, natural, and archaeological heritage depends entirely on the expertise and energy of the heritage practitioners and others who work with it and look after it.*
> *- Minister Malcolm Noonan TD.*

An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council

Session Two –

Case Studies on Capacity Building and Traditional Building Skills

The second session focused on capacity building in the area of traditional building skills. Organised by the Heritage Council, this session showcased several presentations highlighting the important role that traditional skills have played in shaping Ireland's heritage. The session included presentations from traditional crafts people, highlighting their experience and the importance of supporting the continuation of those skills.

Martina Moloney, Chairperson of the Heritage Council, opened the session highlighting the work the Council is undertaking to address the issue of capacity building in heritage. Addressing this issue, Martina spoke of the critical heritage skills deficit and how this has become a key priority in the Heritage Council's Strategic Plan 2023 – 2028 which envisions that Ireland espouses the highest international standard in its quest for excellency in heritage care and practice.

Martina spoke of the need to upgrade existing skill training and to design and deliver relevant courses and programmes to raise standards through accreditation of new qualifications and to have a clear focus on capacity building. The Heritage Council engages with programmes such as the All-Ireland Heritage Skills Programme and various conservation programmes that aim to promote the education and training of traditional skills and promote new opportunities to existing tradespeople.

> *We need a cohesive national effort to tackle the skills deficit and to support the work of the exciting heritage charities and NGO's.*

1. Hugh Kavanagh – Coordinator of the Prince's Foundation and the All-Ireland Heritage Skills Programme

Hugh Kavanagh outlined the All-Ireland Heritage Skills Programme, a year-long programme supported by the Heritage Council, the Historic Environment Division of Northern Ireland and The Prince's Trust, aiming to support crafts people in progressing their skills. Hugh discussed the origins of the programme, how it works and the academic schedule. In his concluding remarks, Hugh reflected on the impact of the programme in preserving traditional crafting skills.

2. Hannah Glass – Decorative Finisher and Graduate of the All-Ireland Heritage Skills Programme

Hannah Glass provided a brief background of how she had come to learn her craft, through the All-Ireland Heritage Skills Programme in 2022. Hannah spoke about her experience in the programme, detailing the academic year, experiencing various different crafts, her projects and the knowledge she had gained in her internships. Concluding her presentation, she stressed the need for more training programmes such as the All-Ireland Heritage Skills programme to promote traditional skills for craftspeople.

3. Killian and Petra O' Flaherty - 8th Generation Stone Masons/Stone Cutters

Eighth generation stonemasons and stone cutters, brother and sister, Killian and Petra O'Flaherty, opened their presentation by providing a brief geological history of their town Ballyknockan in Co Wicklow. Both spoke of the invaluable experience and knowledge they had gained while attending their apprenticeship in Monavalley in Tralee, Co Kerry. Killian spoke about the importance of training opportunities and the need for more stonemasons to undertake apprenticeships to ensure the future for this craft.

4. Eoin Donnelly – Master Hedge Layer

With over 45 years of experience in hedge laying, Eoin Donnelly opened his presentation speaking about the current status of Ireland's hedgerows and the origins of the hedge-laying craft. He outlined the process of hedge laying and how different variables such as the biodiversity of the surrounding area can define what style should be used. He also discussed training courses he runs throughout the year to continue the education of this skill.

Heritage Ireland 2030
A Framework for Heritage
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CAPACITY BUILDING

Session Three –

Keynote Speaker, Dr William Megarry

Dr William Megarry, a senior lecturer in archaeology at Queen's University Belfast and focal point for climate change at the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) was the keynote speaker for this year's Summit, providing a talk on 'Cultural Heritage, Climate and the Importance of Working Together for Meaningful Climate Action'.

In his talk, Dr Megarry provided insight into the climate crisis, focusing on the power of heritage and culture to respond to the climate emergency both in terms of making positive contributions to key challenges and also in building community resilience as motivation for change.

Referring to the theme of the Summit, Dr Megarry spoke about the need for increased capacity in climate action and how this is mirrored through sectoral adaptation plans to address biodiversity and the built and archaeological heritage. Addressing what could be done to mitigate the climate crisis, he explained the challenge and benefit of breaking out of silo-led approaches, encouraging the heritage sector to reach beyond its traditional silos to respond to the wide-ranging and global issue of climate change.

Dr Megarry examined how international bodies such as ICOMOS and the International Union for Conservation and Nature (IUCN) are developing new tools and methodologies. The ICOMOS National Geographic 'Preserving Legacies Project' focuses on the component parts of climate risk analysis at various World Heritage Properties, encouraging participants to draw from a wide range of techniques and experiences to design an approach which works at their own sites. He spoke of case studies ranging from the World Heritage Property of Sceilig Mhichíl (the only European site in the current project round) to Petra in Jordan and the Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras. He praised Ireland's State heritage authorities for their willingness to put forward Sceilig Mhichíl as an observer site.

Moderator Mary Kennedy led a Q&A and raised topics including priorities for government and the wider heritage sector and the need for an overall climate risk register to focus on conservation efforts and funding.

Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin
HERITAGE IRELAND
Second Annual
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Traditional Craft Skills
Our Place in time
ADDRESS DEFICIT WITH
National
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Peatlands
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Big Stack of Papers
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Learn from Scotland
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Hugh Kavanagh
Hedge Laying
Eoin Donnelly
Encourages Biodiversity
"The Best way to Preserve a Craft is to Practice it"
Laying at 45 degrees
45°

Session Four –

Panel Discussion on Capacity Building in Heritage

Panellists:

Minister Malcolm Noonan TD
Minister of State for Nature, Heritage and Electoral Reform

John Mulholland
Chief Executive, Laois County Council and Chairperson of the Rural, Community Tourism and Heritage Committee of the County and City Management Association

Virginia Teehan
Chief Executive of the Heritage Council

Terri Sweeney-Meade
Assistant Principal Architect, Head of Conservation for National Monuments and Historic Properties, Office of Public Works

Elisabeth O'Brien
Technological University Shannon

In the final session, panellists **Minister Malcolm Noonan TD**, **John Mulholland**, **Virginia Teehan**, **Terri Sweeney-Meade** and **Elisabeth O' Brien** discussed their respective organisation's perspective on capacity building in heritage.

John Mulholland gave his view on how the introduction of the Heritage Act in 1995 had brought heritage to the forefront in the operations of local authorities. On capacity building, John spoke of the ongoing collaboration between local authorities and the Heritage Council in relation to the recruitment of heritage staff, which has been integral to growing capacity within local authorities.

Virginia Teehan emphasised the need to have a consolidated strategy for provision of a progressive course of skills training, ensuring that there are future career opportunities in the heritage sector. As part of its own strategy plan, the Heritage

Council anticipates each of the 31 local authorities having a fully supported, multi-disciplined heritage team. Virginia stressed the importance of heritage as an integral part of our national identity. In order to achieve best practice in the protection and management of heritage, grant schemes, multi-annual funding, support for volunteerism and community groups are required.

Terri Sweeney-Meade spoke of the OPW's 4-year apprenticeship programme developed under the Public Service Apprenticeship Plan that launched in 2023. Referring to Killian and Petra O'Flaherty's presentation in Session Two, she spoke about the stone mason and stone cutting apprenticeship which the OPW runs in conjunction with Kerry College of Further Education and the Kerry Education Board. The course upholds a high standard of training, evident from past pupil, Ciaran Finnerty, a silver medallist in the World Skills Competition. On building capacity in relation to traditional skills, Terri stressed the need for collaboration between various heritage organisations and more discussion forums, referring to both the Heritage Ireland 2030 and CHARTER Summits.

Elisabeth O' Brien, spoke of the DASBE (Digital Academy for Sustainable Built Environment) project, a subset of the Technological University of Shannon (TUS). Lis explained that there was a push for shorter, more flexible programmes such as the Energy Renovation for Traditional Building. Once a Continuous Professional Development course, it is now an accredited Level 8 TUS course and the first of its kind. Since opening in September 2022, the course has had 39 successful students, predominantly from a professional background, and are expecting another 38 students in this upcoming academic year. Lis further spoke about how they envisage the course will proceed in the future, taking into consideration feedback received throughout the academic year. In collaboration with OPW, a higher diploma is currently in development by the university which will include 4 embedded certificates relating to sustainable construction studies.

Minister Malcolm Noonan outlined the government's commitment to supporting capacity building. The Minister stressed the importance of maintaining a high standard for traditional skills to support heritage, citing Programme for Government commitments, such as urban regeneration, which will provide for the practical application of traditional skills. The Minister acknowledged the important role of local authorities, recalling his own career in Kilkenny County Council and on local heritage forums. Grant scheme support was hugely impactful to assist with the regeneration of local towns and villages, in doing so providing tangible links for communities to their own heritage. Speaking about how the government can further develop the capacity to deliver, the Minister discussed the impact of more funding to the heritage sector in budgetary cycles, ensuring the sustainability and longevity of the sector in the case of economic downturn, local communities and inclusivity in heritage.

Questions from attendees focused on topics such as youth engagement, heritage units within local authorities and cross-disciplinary collaboration.

On the topic of youth engagement, **Virginia Teehan** stressed that there is an appetite for heritage at primary school level and spoke of the Heritage Council's own 'Heritage in School' programme. Regarding secondary level schools, Virginia spoke of ongoing discussions between the Heritage Council and the Department of Education on how to incorporate heritage components into the curriculum and how this can promote career opportunities within the heritage sector.

On the topic of Heritage Units in local authorities, **John Mulholland** referred to the local enterprise centres set up by local authorities in 2014 and saw that heritage services could ultimately follow such a model. Providing each local authority with the necessary resources will effectively enable their ability to adapt and collaborate across various disciplines such as art, culture, tourism and more.

There was agreement on the importance of cross-disciplinary collaboration within local authorities. This was echoed by the Minister who highlighted how collaboration between disciplines, giving examples of the arts and planning units within local authorities, can enable highly creative environments and that such should be permeated across local governments.

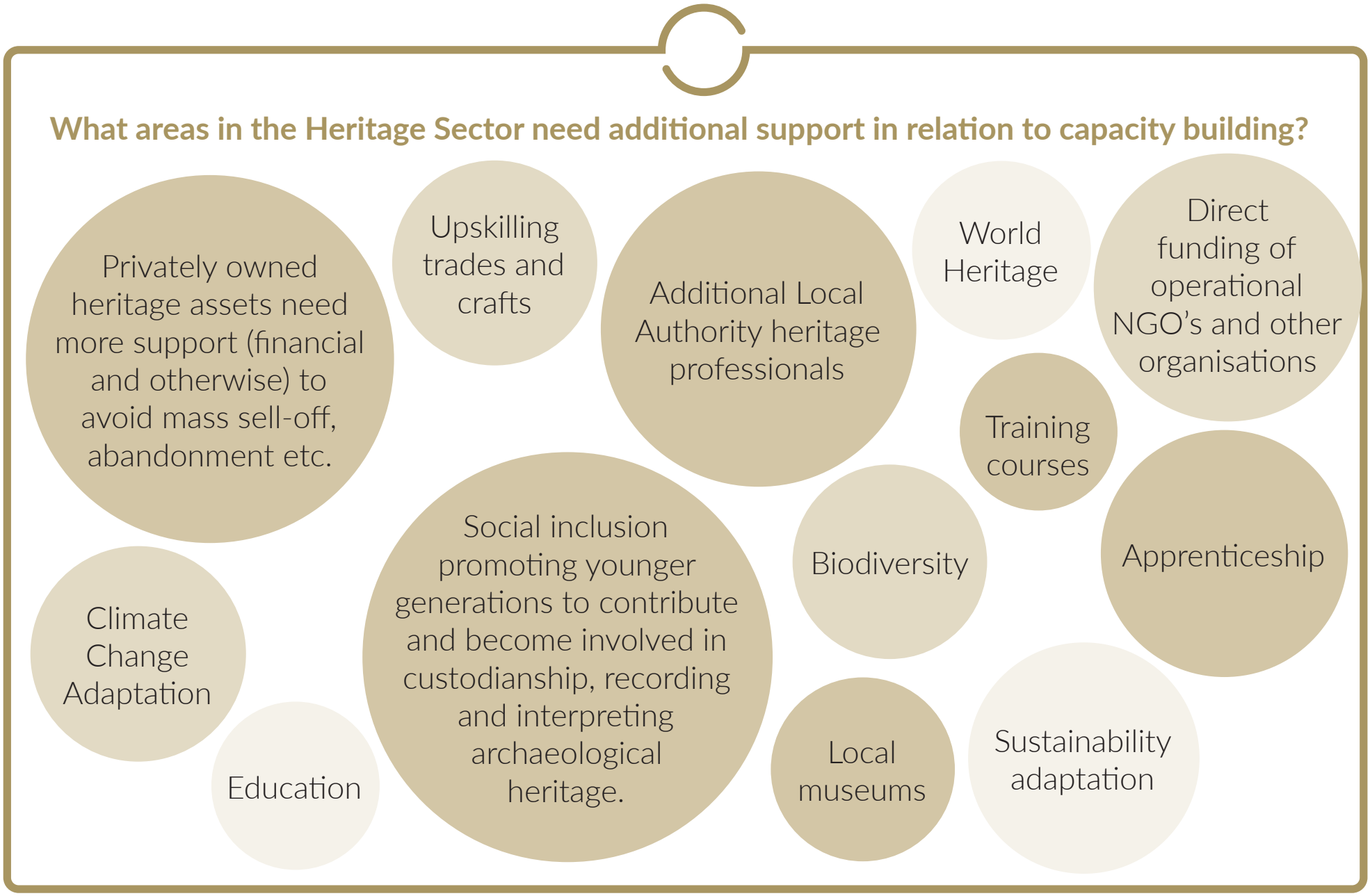
A final question on how heritage can further be embedded as a 'need to have' spoke to the wish for further legislation and policy at a national and local level. The Minster responded to this question by referring to the 4th National Biodiversity Plan, set to launch in 2024, which will become a statutory basis following its incorporation into each County Development Plan. John Mulholland pointed out that local governments are continually under review and highlighted that topics such as the environment, biodiversity and heritage are at the forefront of local government priorities.

Throughout the day, following engagement with attendees both online and in person, a number of Word Clouds were created around various questions.

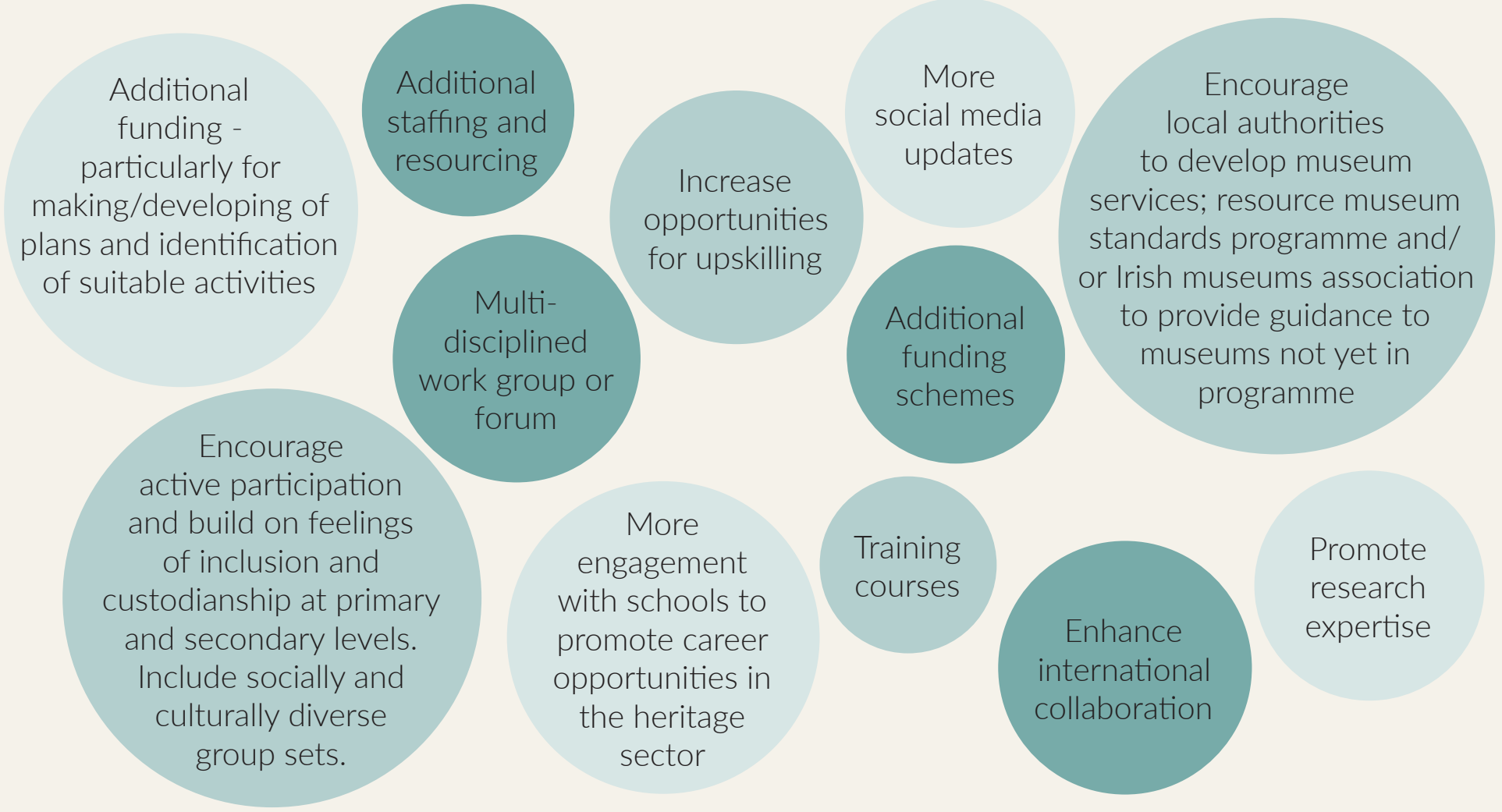
What else can the State do to support the Heritage groups and projects?

Which supports and initiatives have the most impact for community heritage?

What areas in the Heritage Sector need additional support in relation to capacity building?



What needs to be done to make this happen?



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