

COUNTY SLIGO HERITAGE PLAN 2016-2020

(INCORPORATING THE COUNTY SLIGO BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN 2011-2015)

SUMMARY REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION

LEGEND

	Progress on Heritage/Biodiversity Plan Action
	Part Progress in Heritage/Biodiversity Plan Action
	External Initiative to address Heritage/Biodiversity Plan Action
	Limited Progress on Heritage/Biodiversity Plan Action



Sligo County Council
Comhairle Chontae Shligigh



An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council

County Sligo Heritage Plan 2016-2020

Statement of Vision and Strategic Themes

The aim of the County Sligo Heritage Forum is:

'To inspire our community to know, value and care for Sligo's unique heritage and to increase awareness, appreciation and enjoyment of our heritage for all.'

The following plan structure has been adopted:

Strategic Themes

These have been established to facilitate structured heritage development over the next five years. These articulate broad statements of intent, which will guide the work of the County Sligo Heritage Forum and the Heritage Office.

Actions

Actions will be initiated to realise the strategic themes identified.

THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIC THEMES HAVE BEEN ADOPTED:

- Raise awareness of Sligo's heritage
- Promote the conservation and management of Sligo's heritage
- Increase understanding of the value of Sligo's heritage
- Promote community participation in heritage plans and projects
- Record the heritage of Sligo and disseminate existing data

Objective 1: Raise awareness of Sligo's heritage

1	Maintain and develop www.sligococo.ie/heritage to promote Sligo's heritage, communicate the work of Sligo Heritage Forum and, as a heritage portal allowing access to sources of heritage information.
2	Repeat the County Sligo Heritage Awareness Survey undertaken in 2007 to evaluate current levels of heritage awareness in Sligo.
3	Develop and implement a Heritage Communications Strategy targeted at key stakeholders.
4	Continue to use exhibitions, publications, digital technologies, local media and social media to raise awareness of key aspects of Sligo's heritage.
5	Continue to support and organise conferences, talks and seminars on heritage themes/topics relevant to the conservation and promotion of Sligo's heritage, including an annual heritage seminar.
6	Continue to promote wider awareness of all aspects of Sligo's heritage with key stakeholders through an annual heritage awareness programme and through participation in national programmes such as Heritage Week and Biodiversity Day and other relevant heritage days.
7	Develop a heritage education and awareness programme in partnership with Sligo Education Centre aimed at primary, post primary pupils, teachers and the school community.
8	Organise a bi-annual seminar on the care and maintenance of heritage buildings for building conservation practitioners and owners.
9	Organise a bi-annual seminar on the care and conservation of graveyards.
10	Commission heritage guides to showcase the wealth of Sligo's heritage and make these available on the internet.

Objective 2: Promote the conservation and management of Sligo's heritage

11	Promote integrated conservation planning and sustainable development through heritage appraisal of development plans.
12	Liaise with the Office of Public Works and key stakeholders to address the conservation, management and presentation of Carrowmore/Knocknarea/Carns Hill.
13	Liaise with key stakeholders and the local community to ensure the conservation, management and interpretation of the internationally important Spanish Armada wreck site at Streedagh, Co. Sligo.
14	Support the preparation of a Landscape Character Assessment and Historic Landscape Characterisation for County Sligo, and its integration into the County Development Plan/Local Area Plans.
15	Implement the County Sligo Biodiversity Action Plan (2011-2015) and develop a new plan in 2016 for years 2016-2020.
16	Review all conservation plans prepared to date and prepare/implement conservation plans in partnership with relevant stakeholders for key heritage sites in County Sligo. Including, but not exclusive to, Drumcliffe and the Greenfort, Sligo.
17	Re-establish the Field Monument Advisor Programme.
18	Engage key stakeholders in developing and implementing best practice care and conservation of historic graveyards (including masonry ruins) in County Sligo.
19	Liaise with key stakeholders in the care and maintenance of Sligo's built heritage and public realm through, policy, best practice guidance, public realm planning, heritage led regeneration and the promotion of traditional building skills.
20	Develop a heritage assets register for Sligo County Council, to ensure that heritage sites in the ownership of Sligo County Council are appropriately managed, interpreted and accessible. Establish a fund for the maintenance and care of heritage assets in Local Authority ownership.
21	Develop a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the county for integration into the next County Development Plan.

22	Commission a study which engages local communities in examining the potential of a future application for UNESCO World Heritage Site Status for Sligo's Neolithic centres of Cuil Irra (centred at Carrowmore) and Lough Arrow (centred at Carrowkeel).
23	Commission a Public Realm Plan for Sligo City, which will encourage greater community involvement in identifying, appreciating and conserving its distinctive character.
24	Liaise with the Office of Public Works and key stakeholders to address the conservation, management and presentation of Carrowkeel.
25	Liaise with the Office of Public Works and key stakeholders to address the conservation, management and presentation of Inishmurray.

Objective 3: Increase understanding of the value of Sligo's heritage

26	Commission a report to examine the value of Sligo's heritage to quality of life and the cultural and economic development of the county. Use the findings of the report to advocate for greater investment in and support for heritage.
27	Research and develop county heritage trails/themed heritage trails, with a focus on publicly accessible heritage sites and attractions in co-operation with other organisations, communities and landowners.
28	Develop a project to audit heritage assets along Sligo's Wild Atlantic Way in partnership with key stakeholders and local communities with a view to identifying and developing heritage projects and heritage trails.
29	Undertake research and commission a historic plaque scheme for Sligo.
30	Assess the current level of access to National Monuments and publicly owned archaeological monuments in the county and, where possible, encourage partnerships to provide appropriately managed access to and interpretation of these sites.
31	Sligo Heritage Forum and Sligo County Council to actively explore EU funding opportunities to support the delivery of strategic heritage projects on a regional or trans-boundary basis with a focus on archaeological landscapes, historic towns and biodiversity.
32	Continue to support and advocate for the development of a County Museum for Sligo.
33	Liaise with relevant sectors in the development of greenways/walking/cycling routes to ensure that such projects are developed in a sustainable manner and that every opportunity is taken to promote the natural and built heritage along such routes.

Objective 4: Promote community participation in heritage plans and projects

34	Re-establish Sligo County Councils Community Heritage Grant Scheme to support local communities to undertake heritage projects.
35	Liaise with and support the Sligo Heritage Linkage Group established under the Sligo Public Participation Network.
36	Build the capacity of local communities to engage in sustainable heritage projects by providing the necessary advice, information and training.
37	Develop a project to survey local and traditional place names in partnership with local communities.
38	Develop a project to support graveyard memorial recording by communities.
39	Develop a project to support the collection of oral histories by communities.
40	Support local communities to carry out heritage audits of towns and villages in County Sligo and to present the information online or through information boards (where appropriate) in order to strengthen local communities sense of place.

Objective 5: Record the heritage of Sligo and disseminate existing data

41	Ensure that any information generated through the implementation of the Heritage Plan and previous Heritage Plans, is accessible to all and widely available.
42	Audit existing surveys/inventories of heritage relating to Sligo in order to develop and implement a prioritised research programme to address knowledge gaps through partnership projects.
43	Support the participation of individuals and communities in heritage surveys and recording heritage data in County Sligo.
44	Establish a Sligo Naturalists Field Club and organise an annual programme of activities in partnership with national and local stakeholders in order to promote biological recording in the county.
45	Commission a survey to identify and evaluate demesne landscapes in County Sligo and promote the conservation of their built and natural heritage.
46	Commission a study of vernacular architecture in County Sligo in order to record and describe form, materials and setting.
47	Commission a study of Architectural Conservation Areas in Sligo in order to establish a baseline of current condition of the historic built environment with a view to making recommendations for the future care and management of buildings within ACA's.
48	Commission research on and a survey of mass paths, mass rocks, shrines and holy wells in County Sligo.
49	Commission a study to survey and evaluate historic shop fronts within County Sligo.

County Sligo Biodiversity Action Plan 2011-2015

The County Sligo Biodiversity Action Plan 2011-2015 provides the following objectives:

Objective 1:

To enable the delivery of the Sligo Biodiversity Action plan through appropriate resourcing and partnership work

To ensure that many different sectors are working together with common goals and adequate resources.

Objective 2:

To raise awareness of biodiversity in Sligo, its value and the issues facing it

The role of biodiversity, its importance and the threats facing it are often not well known and need to be taken to target audiences.

Objective 3:

To better understand the biodiversity of Sligo

In many cases we know so little about the biodiversity that we share our county with that it is unclear what we need to do to help it.

Objective 4:

To protect and enhance habitats and species in Sligo, taking account of national and local priorities

Often because of the lack of value placed biodiversity, it is facing a number of threats from many human influences. Not only is there a need to stop damaging our environment, but we also need to make areas better to make amends for past losses.

The objectives above are supported by the following 28 actions for biodiversity:

Objective 1:

To enable the successful delivery of the Sligo Biodiversity Action plan through appropriate resourcing and partnership work

	Action
1.	Appoint a County Biodiversity Officer
2.	Establish a Natural Heritage Working Group with full representation of stakeholders to facilitate the implementation of the County Sligo BAP

Objective 2:

To raise awareness of biodiversity in Sligo, its value and the issues facing it

	Action
Raising awareness of the value of biodiversity	
3.	Hold an annual Biodiversity Day, using a single theme each year relevant to biodiversity priorities in Sligo to include Freshwater Wetlands, Coastal Habitats, Hedgerows and Verges, Woodland and Farmland for appropriate audiences.
4.	Promote existing and new biodiversity-related campaigns, events and activities through a Sligo Biodiversity Awareness Programme, including a dedicated page on the County Council website.
5.	Operate a rolling media awareness campaign on the biodiversity of Sligo to include, where to see biodiversity, and updates on current projects.
Providing biodiversity education	
6.	Promote biodiversity priorities in environmental education, including the formulation of local material for the 'Biodiversity' year in the Green Schools Programme and the coverage of local biodiversity priorities in the Heritage in Schools Scheme.
7.	Promote the NPWS outreach education service in Sligo to provide primary school children with an opportunity to learn about biodiversity in Sligo.
Providing technical expertise and information	
8.	Provide training related to tree and hedgerow management for landowners and council staff.

9.	Explore opportunities to provide targeted advice to REPS planners to enhance biodiversity knowledge in farming, including training on priority habitats and species in Sligo.
10.	Develop capacity of community groups, landowners and homeowners in taking positive action for biodiversity through appropriate training.
11.	Promote Biodiversity Advice Notes to ensure best practice in all Council work areas.

Objective 3:

To better understand the biodiversity of Sligo

	Action
Providing a system for recording and storing biodiversity information	
12.	Collect and store biodiversity data relating to Sligo in a format compatible with the National Biodiversity Data Centre.
13.	Promote the recording and holding of biodiversity information in a format compatible with the National Biodiversity Data Centre.
Understanding the current status of important habitats and species in Sligo	
14.	Carry out an inventory of broadleaved woodland in the county, to include mapping of existing woodlands, ecological status and current management. Use the outcome to raise the profile of important woodland types and their management needs.
15.	Carry out a county hedgerow survey for the purpose of informing and developing a county hedgerow policy.
16.	Undertake a wetlands survey in Sligo, taking account of priorities to identify and map fens and flushes, swamps, and floodplain areas to identify quality and current threats. Use the results to formulate a Habitat Action Plan for Freshwater Wetlands.
17.	Carry out a survey of important coastal habitats (Sand Dunes, Machair, Estuaries, Islands, Shore and Near-shore Areas) including important species and sites, and issues affecting them. Use the results to formulate a Habitat Action Plan (or plans) for Sand Dunes, Estuaries and Inshore Marine Areas.

18.	Prioritise nationally important species in need of surveying in County Sligo from the current list (see appendix 6) and undertake surveys.
19.	Continue NPWS bird use mapping and BirdWatch Ireland IWeBS coordinated counts. Use a co-ordinated BirdWatch and NPWS effort to ensure coordinated IWeBS counts of all 3 bays at least once a year.
20.	Undertake desk-based habitat mapping for County Sligo to Fossitt Level II (minimum) in relation to the review and development of development plans.

Objective 4:

To protect and enhance habitats and species in Sligo, taking account of national and local priorities

	Action
Protection of important sites and species	
21.	Agree and adopt a process of identifying and protecting sites of County Importance for Biodiversity using appropriate criteria. Designating sites of County Importance for Biodiversity using appropriate criteria.
22.	Maintain a database of consented proposals with potential impact on designated Natura 2000 sites (to include the nature and extent of potential impact) to help identify potential cumulative and <i>ex situ</i> impacts.
23.	Agree and adopt a best practice approach to incorporating referral zones around designated sites to facilitate decision making
24.	Agree and implement appropriate guidelines for the protection of species in need of strict protection under the EU habitats Directive (notably otters and bat species).
25.	Promote better communication and continue to liaise with the relevant agencies to promote riparian cover through REPS, FEPS and the Native Woodland Scheme for the benefit of Salmon and Trout species.
Taking practical measures to safeguard biodiversity	

26.	Prepare, adopt and implement an action plan for alien species control, with a focus on key invasive species occurring in County Sligo e.g. Giant Hogweed and Japanese Knotweed.
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27.	Undertake a review of management for biodiversity on council owned and controlled land and implement recommendations.
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Changing our behaviour to safeguard biodiversity

28.	Agree and adopt a partnership-wide policy on issues affecting biodiversity, including the promotion of FSC certified timber, recycled wood and paper products and peat-free compost alternatives.
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