

# An overview of County Heritage and Biodiversity Plan actions 2021

by Deirdre Burns, Heritage Officer

Dec 2021



An Chomhairle Oidhreachta  
The Heritage Council





**Heritage Office co-ordinates an annual Heritage & Biodiversity programme overseen by Wicklow Heritage Forum (Meet 4 times per year).**

Core funding from WCC the following:

- **County Heritage Plan Fund** – The Heritage Council
- **National Biodiversity Action Plan Fund** – NPWS, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
- **Community Monuments Fund** – National Monuments Service, DHLGH
- **Built Heritage Schemes: BHIS & HSF** (on behalf of Planning)
- **Other: Creative Ireland/ Healthy Ireland**

<b>CHP Actions 2021 co-funded by WCC and The Heritage Council</b>	<b>COUNTY HERITAGE PLAN</b>
<b>Glendalough Community Archaeology Project</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> Aug – 2 weeks. 8-10 participants per day/ 57 ‘man days’ in total</li> <li>• Confirmed base of Early Medieval Monastic enclosure and stone lined channels for water mill.</li> <li>• Perforated stone beads (c.10<sup>th</sup> C) and medieval pottery.</li> <li>• Online talk held on 17<sup>th</sup> Aug</li> </ul>
<b>Swift Champions initiative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 17 towns and villages around county Wicklow, a total of 36 individual locations. The total number of boxes involved is 72, of three types: single, double (Zeist plywood), and triple (Genesis, magnesium board) boxes.</li> </ul>
<b>Kilbride Mausoleum And Graveyard Conservation Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi disciplinary study – Archaeology, History, Trees, Structural engineering, birds/bats – to compile conservation report. First step to planned application for capital funding (under CMF 2022)</li> </ul>
<b>Interpretive signage at Brittas Bay</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit of existing signage and interpretation</li> <li>• Recommendations re: messaging, branding and communication,</li> </ul>

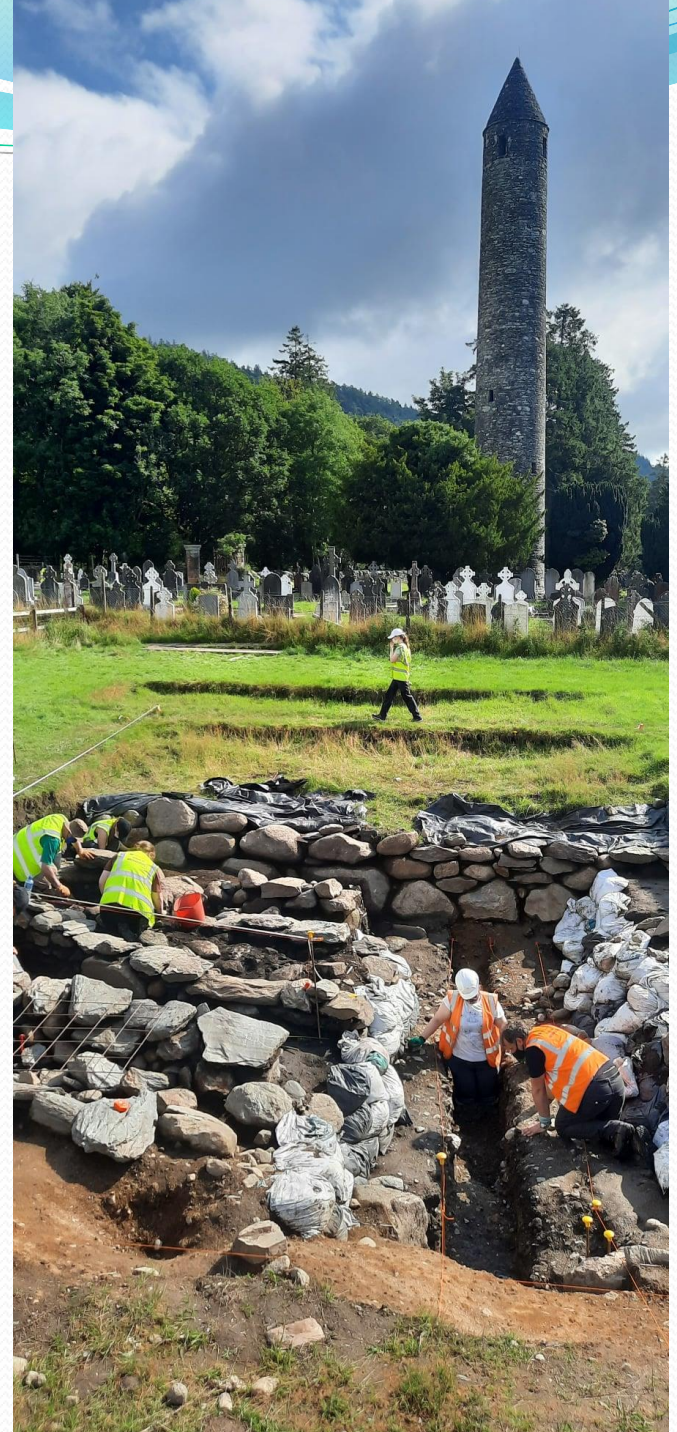


Site visit to Kilbride Mausoleum and Graveyard in June 2021 with local committee, TÚS supervisor, historian and project botanist to discuss best practice management for vegetation.



Top: Image of swift nest box prior to installation near the Abbey Grounds in Wicklow Town

Right: Community Excavation under way at Glendalough in Aug 2021



## COUNTY HERITAGE PLAN

### Our Wicklow Heritage – Connecting People and Place

### Heritage awareness/ training/ resources activities.

- **OWH Community Heritage Website** – iCAN project, 7 members groups including a county Wicklow site: 50k+ audience
- **Know Your 5 K course**; Irish Heritage School, x 4 workshops 50 participants (April).
- **Digital Upskilling online course**; Michael Fortune of folklore.ie X 7 online sessions (Oct/Nov)
- Our Wicklow Heritage: '**Daoine agus Áit** – Connecting our communities'. Joint project, co-funded with Healthy Ireland, in partnership with National Museum of Ireland, Clare and Galway county council's heritage offices. 19 Community groups (45 persons) participated in photography and creative writing workshops to produce bespoke postcards for their local area. Postcards produced and distributed for Heritage Week along with short videos from each group.

### National Heritage Week

15<sup>th</sup>- 22<sup>nd</sup> August. 45+ projects registered online for county Wicklow on [www.heritageweek.ie](http://www.heritageweek.ie) for County Wicklow. WCC projects registered include Wicklow Swift Project; Daoine agus Ait Connecting Communities; River Liffey Stories Film Project

# Our Wicklow Heritage

A living archive of Wicklow communities



Our Wicklow  
Heritage  
Community Archives

[Home](#) [About](#) [Members](#) [Explore our network](#)

 [Contact us](#)



Welcome to our community  
heritage network for County  
Wicklow

Screenshot from [www.wicklowheritage.org](http://www.wicklowheritage.org) Our Wicklow Heritage Website is the online repository for information relating to the heritage of County Wicklow - nature, history, folklore and cultural heritage. The County site [www.heritage.wicklowheritage.org](http://www.heritage.wicklowheritage.org) provides a key community hub for Heritage Office communications.

This is a significant community resource with a network of 6 affiliated sister community websites in county Wicklow and others in counties Clare, Galway and Mayo. Global annual audience of more than 50,000. Ongoing support and networking for participating groups is provided through HO in association with the National Museum of Ireland.

BAP actions funded by WCC & NPWS	BIODIVERSITY
<b>Brittas Bay Monitoring and conservation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mowing regime, marked out and fenced plot for grazers</li> <li>• Undertook bird, botany and butterfly surveying</li> <li>• Community day in Sept.</li> <li>• Sea Buckthorn removal with WCC MD staff over winter</li> </ul>
<b>Kilmacanogue Marsh</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation audit and recommendations</li> <li>• Liaison with local community and Bray MD</li> <li>• Scrub clearance undertaken to formalise footpaths</li> <li>• Excavation in marsh to restore open water for increased diversity</li> </ul>
<b>Botanical and ecological surveys of historic graveyards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Glendalough and Kilbride (also others as part of CMF) baseline info to inform on good management</li> </ul>
<b>Biodiversity Awareness programme:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme of <b>nature themed zoom talk</b> evening/ lunchtime (8 in total ) held in partnership with Wicklow Library Service held from Feb- July.</li> <li>• <b>Coastwatch</b> community workshop held in Wicklow Town 29<sup>th</sup> Sept –co-ordination of volunteer citizen science survey for County Wicklow.</li> <li>• Production and free distribution of <b>publications</b> (All Ireland Pollinator Plan signs, Wicklow Wildlife posters and Gardening for Wildlife booklets and other Wicklow habitat guides) .</li> </ul>





**Brittas Bay** - in 2021 botanical surveying of our mowing plot demonstrated the reduction of bracken growth, increase in dune grasses and heather and an overall enhancement of this dune habitat in accordance with its (SAC) conservation objectives.

Figure 1: Mowing plot after works completed (22 October 2021)

The plot remains under extensive and in places dense, coverage of Bracken. However, both the overall % cover and the apparent density of the Bracken remaining was noted to have reduced when compared with the survey carried out in 2019 and 2020 (Table 1).

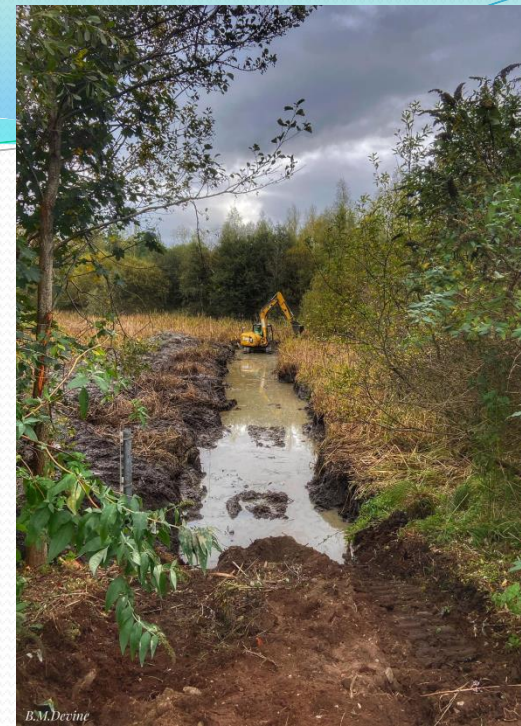
Table 1 Broad vegetation cover across grazing plot (2021) – estimated by walkover

Vegetation type/mosaic	Estimated % cover in plot 2019	Estimated % cover in plot 2020	Estimated % cover in plot 2021	Apparent relative trend
Bracken (including Bramble)	70	65	60-65	↓
Dune grassland/grassland	10	<15	<15	↑
grassland/burnet rose/bramble	15	<20	<20	=
Scrub/burnet	<3	<3	<3	=
Heather/dune heath	<2	<2	<3	↑

**KILMACANOGUE MARSH BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN**

Report to Wicklow County Council

October 2021



Site visit to the Marsh in July 2021 with project team (Bray MD engineer, Cllr Rory O Connor, Alan Lauder Ecologist, local community reps and Heritage Officer) which was followed up with the implementation of key actions as outlined in our Biodiversity Management plan. Works included scrub clearance to define paths and the clearance of vegetation in the marsh to create an open water habitat for increased wildlife diversity.



# Our Wicklow Biodiversity

TUESDAY 18TH MAY 7PM  
Wicklow Rivers - Ecology  
and Connectivity



## Community Biodiversity Training

County Wicklow Partnership

FOR TOWNS, VILLAGES AND  
COMMUNITIES IN WICKLOW

ORGANISED BY COUNTY WICKLOW PARTNERSHIP  
AND THE HERITAGE OFFICE OF WICKLOW COUNTY  
COUNCIL

FUNDED BY THE LEADER RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
PROGRAMME



# SPRING NATURE

ONLINE TALKS @ 7 PM  
ON TUESDAYS  
FEB- MARCH

## 2021

The Heritage and  
Biodiversity Office of  
Wicklow County  
Council & Wicklow  
Library Service  
invite you to connect  
with nature on your  
doorstep. Book your  
FREE talk at Wicklow  
Library Service  
EVENTBRITE

#KeepWell

**FEB 9TH** GARDENING FOR  
BIODIVERSITY WITH JUANITA BROW

**16TH FEB** WICKLOW'S GARDEN BIRD  
WITH NIAL HATCH, BIRDWATCH  
IRELAND

**9TH MARCH** AN INTRODUCTION TO  
CITIZEN SCIENCE WITH OISIN DUFFY  
NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY DATA  
CENTRE

**23RD MARCH** EXPLORE THE  
SHORE WORKSHOP WITH DAVE  
WALL, NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY  
DATA CENTRE



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Examples of Biodiversity Awareness activities and resources (e.g. online talks, training and publications) and activities in line with the All Ireland Pollinator Plan.

# Wicklow Community Monument Fund (CMF)

Notification received on 16<sup>th</sup> June from the Dept of Housing, Local Government and Heritage of a total funding of €65,000 for SEVEN Wicklow archaeology projects under the CMF2021. This fund supports archaeological heritage and is a key part of the Dept.'s Climate Action strategy.

- **Baltinglass Hillforts**, an assessment of archaeological significance;
- **Whitefield Graveyard** access improvements;
- **Wicklow Town Community Archaeology** Initiative;
- *Dunganstown Castle conservation advice* \*\*PRIVATELY OWNED
- **Kilbride** archaeological investigations,
- **Arklow Castle** conservation report
- Conservation Management Plans for historic graveyards (**Ballymacroghue , Mullinacuffe and Whitefield**).

# Conservation Management Plans for historic graveyards

## Case Study: **Ballymacroghue , Mullinacuffe and Whitefield.**

The Conservation Plan Model:

*a conservation plan is a document which sets out what is significant about a place and what policies should be used to retain and enhance that significance for future use.*

- Provide an understanding of the historical significance of the monument within the local area and within the wider environment.
- Provide an understanding of the current condition of the site.
- Provide recommendations in relation to access, conservation and management of the graveyard, now and in the future.
- Provide an understanding of the site as a sustainable tourism, educational and community asset



Mullinacuffe Graveyard – sample photos.

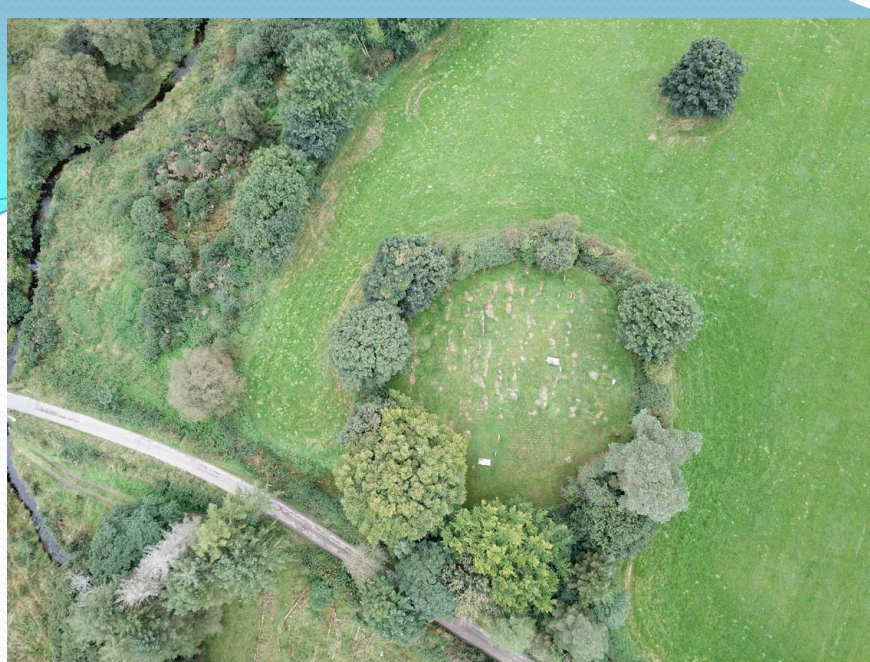


Plate 8: Before and after vegetation clearance Whitefield.

Whitefield Graveyard, of high historical interest to the locality. To be managed in a pollinator friendly manner with good potential to serve as a community open space/ park.



Plate 11: Footprint of T-shaped church facing southeast.

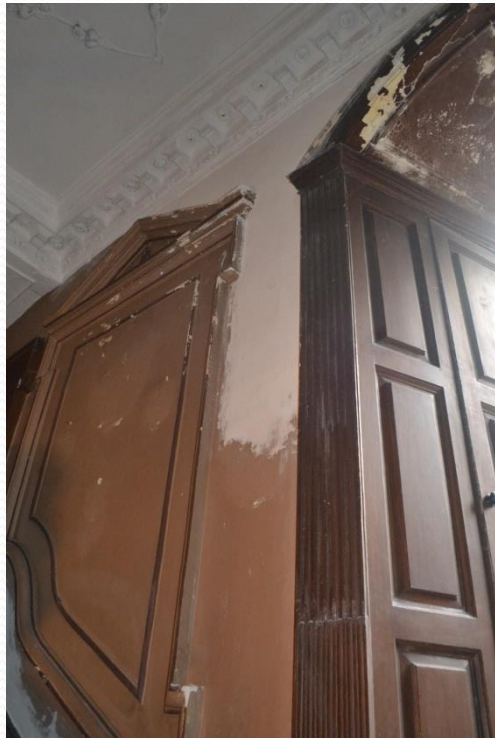
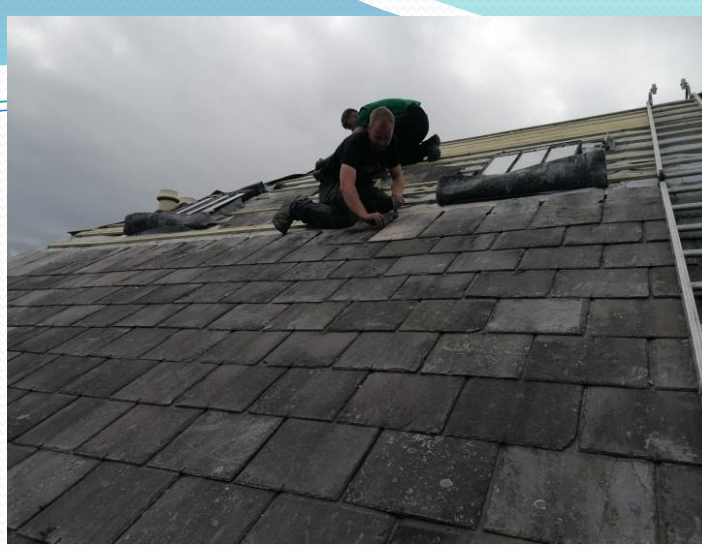


There are at least five stone masons at work in Ballymaghroe; the Aughrim Granite mason, Blue Slate mason, Dennis Cullen, David Doyle and William Higgins. These were professional stone cutters whose work and skill were highly sought after. Further analysis of the headstones will be completed for the next phase of the project and prior to the booklet publication.



# BHIS & HSF 2021 Projects

BHIS	
Ballyarthur House, Ballyarthur, Arklow	€8,000.00
4 Royal Marine Terrace, Bray	€15,000.00
The Game Keeper's Lodge, Coolattin, Shillelagh	€8,500.00
Whitfield Hse, Church Rd, Greystones	€13,720.00
1 Claremount Tce, Meath Road, Bray	€11,350.00
St. Kevins Church of Ireland, Hollywood	€2,500.00
Neptune House, Strand Road, Bray	€5,000.00
Killarney House, Killarney Road, Bray	€7,930.00
	Total €72,000

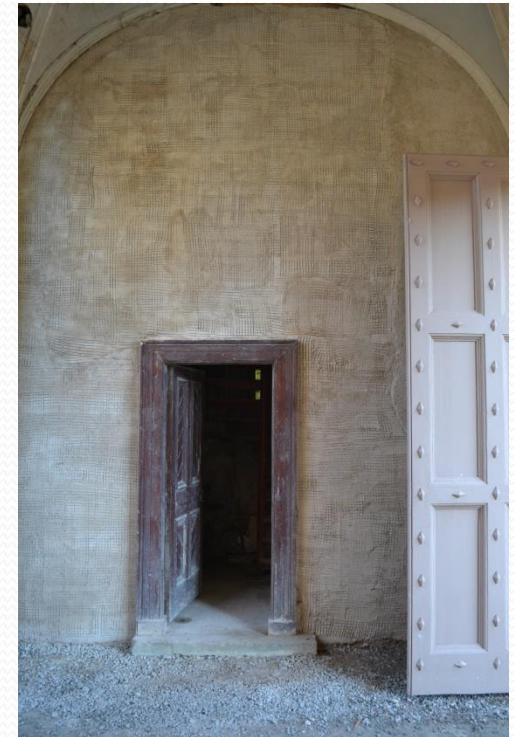


**“The most eco friendly house is one that has already been built”** . Examples of roof, window and other repairs supported by BHIS in 2021. Conserving our built heritage contributes to our historic environment and to our Climate Action. BHIS supports owners in carrying out small and large scale projects to conserve their historic buildings and make them more resilient – undertaking repair rather than replacement, ensuring that embodied carbon in these buildings is retained, and supporting employment in building and traditional skills.



**Historic Structures Fund (HSF)** ; There were two successful projects in County Wicklow in 2021, each receiving an allocation of €50,000.

Images from Killruddery clocktower; repairs to masonry and timber doors was undertaken to conserve this structure as a key part of the wider visitor offering at Killruddery estate.





### **HSF funded repairs to Russborough House - Weir Wall.**

Running parallel to the N81 road, the repair of this previously overgrown and obscured structure has considerable community benefits, facilitating the route of the Blessington Greenway via the historic tunnel under the road which connects to this structure.

### **Built Heritage Funding 2022 :**

- **2022 BHIS & HSF** Schemes now advertised and open for application – closing date 28<sup>th</sup> Jan.
- **Community Monument Fund 2022** currently advertised – closing date 15<sup>th</sup> Feb  
See [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie) under latest news for more information.

### **Local Biodiversity Action Fund 2022**

Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform Malcolm Noonan announced the Local Biodiversity Action Fund will receive funding of €1.5 million in 2022 – a 300% increase since 2019. The fund assists local authorities to implement the National Biodiversity Action Plan at a local level and is administered by the Local Authority Heritage Officer.

### **Contact**

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

<https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Arts-Heritage-Archives/Heritage>

<https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/Your-Council/Climate-Action-and-Biodiversity/Biodiversity>

[www.wicklowheritage.org](http://www.wicklowheritage.org) (Our Wicklow Heritage Website landing page)

[www.heritage.wicklowheritage.org](http://www.heritage.wicklowheritage.org) (County Wicklow Site)



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