

County Wicklow Heritage Plan 2025-2029

Report on Pre-draft Consultation

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Introduction

To inform the process of developing the County Wicklow Heritage Plan 2025-2029 and assist in gathering the views of the public and stakeholders a pre-draft consultation was conducted. A range of methods were employed to provide opportunities for interested parties to have an input to the pre-draft consultation as follows:

- An introductory video, details of the public information drop-in sessions in the library, links to the online survey and a facility to make a written submission were made available on the Wicklow County Council Online Consultation Hub at [County Heritage Plan 2024 \(wicklow.ie\)](#)
- **An online survey** was hosted from Mid-May until the end of July 2024 on the Wicklow County Council website (75 responses were received, including 70 online responses and 5 hardcopies). The survey was designed to prompt respondents to give their views on why heritage is important to them, priority themes in terms of managing heritage and connecting people to heritage, and the key perceived challenges or threats to Wicklow's heritage. Respondents were also asked for their views on how to make it easier for people to engage with heritage and about their level of interest in various sorts of community heritage projects and training.

The survey (accessible on the consultation hub and by QR code and hyperlink) was promoted through Wicklow County Council's online consultation hub, <https://consult.wicklow.ie/>, the Our Wicklow Heritage website <https://heritage.wicklowheritage.org/>, on social media, in local newspapers and on East Coast Radio. Members of the Wicklow Heritage Forum and Public Participation Network were invited to raise awareness of the consultation and ways to engage in the process with their members and the wider community.

- **Heritage Plan public information drop-in sessions** were held in four of Wicklow's branch Libraries (total of 29 attendees) as follows:
 - Arklow Library, 16 May 2024
 - Wicklow Town Library, 21 May 2024
 - Blessington Library, 13 June 2024
 - Bray Library (Eglington Road), 18 June 2024
 - Greystones Library, 20 June 2024

Copies of the survey, QR code and hyperlink were available at these events and attendees were invited to complete the survey or make written submissions.

- **Written submissions** were invited to facilitate statutory bodies, groups and individuals who wished to provide open-ended submissions. In total eleven submissions were received. Seven of the submissions were from individuals, community groups, and non-governmental organisations and four submissions were received from public bodies.

This report on the key themes raised during the consultation process was used to inform the development of the draft Heritage Plan.

Overview of inputs to the pre-draft consultation process

Written Submissions

The following public bodies made submissions to the pre-draft consultation:

- Transport Infrastructure Ireland: Advising that the archaeological reports on the Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) Digital Heritage collections would be a useful resource for Wicklow County Council to consider.
- Geological Survey of Ireland: Encouraging use of and reference to the organisation's datasets, considered relevant to the environmental assessment and planning process.
- Inland Fisheries Ireland: Detailing observations, for consideration on compiling the Heritage Plan in relation to the impacts of climate change on the aquatic environment and fisheries, flood resilience and nature-based solutions, water abstraction, transport, and guidelines on river restoration works.
- The Heritage Council: A submission based on the Heritage Council's Strategic Plan 2023-2028 including both general comments applicable to all city and county Heritage Plans, and specific comments and recommendations related to the County Wicklow Heritage Plan.

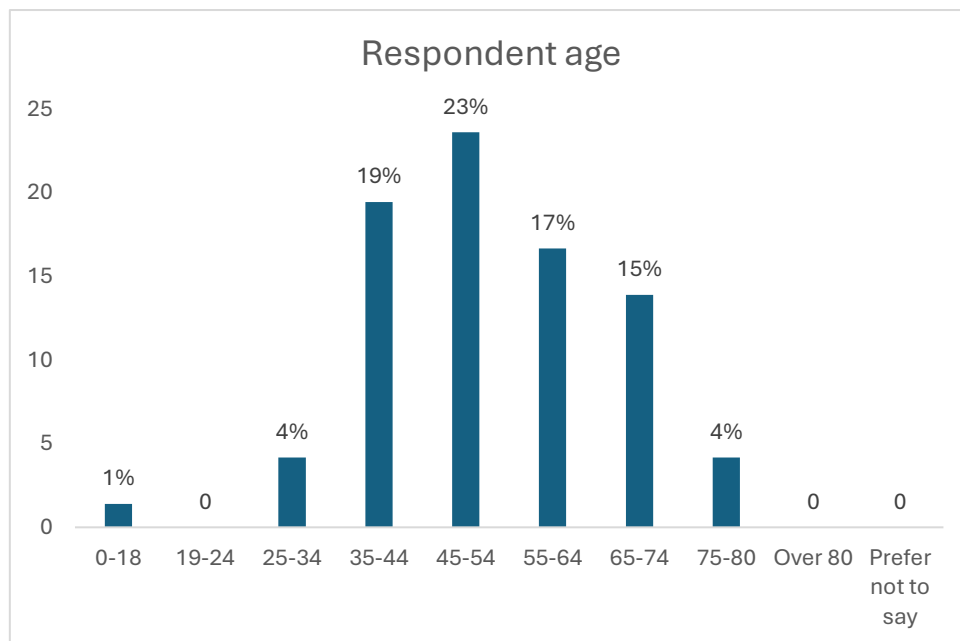
The following is a summary of the key issues raised in written submissions from individuals, community groups, and non-governmental organisations relating to protecting and managing heritage sites and assets and connecting people to heritage:

- The potential impacts on biodiversity, marine and coastal heritage of developing a wind farm on the Arklow Bank.
- Baltinglass Hillfort Complex - the need to protect this unique landscape and the opportunity to develop its potential as an asset for the local community, the county, and Ireland.
- Observations on protecting the heritage of Delgany covering urban services and planning processes; transportation systems; mass media support; local community involvement; entrepreneurship and business development; environmental management; disaster management; and tourism development planning.
- The need to protect Castletimon Dolmen.

- The future development of Arklow Maritime Museum as a venue for education, culture and tourism.
- Development of a heritage trail in Fassaroe to foster a sense of place and provide heritage walks and areas of interest for education and tourism.
- The legal right to reasonable access to the countryside for a broad spectrum of recreational users. The submission included a range of recommendations in relation to enhanced, managed and inclusive access to heritage sites, national monuments and natural heritage based on international best practice and in partnership with stakeholders including the community and landowners. A wide range of measures for protection, management, recording and communication of the archaeological, natural and cultural heritage of the county were also proposed.

Pre-draft consultation survey

The pre-draft consultation survey received a total of 75 responses (including 5 hardcopies). 85% of respondents indicated they were answering as an individual and 12% on behalf of a group or organisation (3% did not respond to the question).

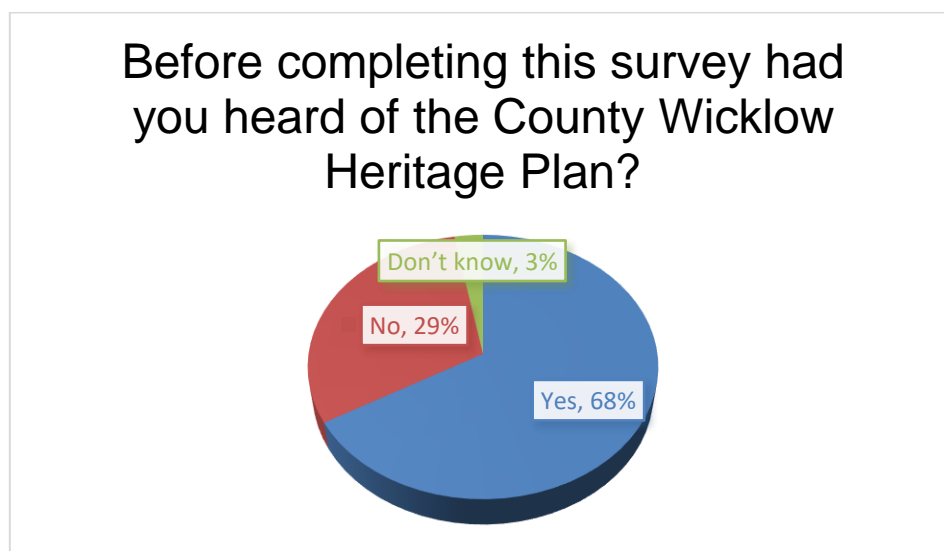


Of those answering the survey as an individual:

- 51% identify as female, 29% as male, 3% would prefer not to say, 0% as other (17% did not answer the question).
- 42% of respondents were aged between 35 and 54, and 19% are 65 or over. (17% did not answer the question).

Those responding on behalf of groups were not asked questions about age or gender.

In total seven groups responded to the survey including heritage groups, a not-for-profit environmental organisation, a national educational charity, a community non-governmental organisation, and a not-for-profit organisation representing the local community and businesses.



Over two thirds (68%) of respondents were aware of the County Wicklow Heritage Plan prior to completing the survey.

Views on the importance of heritage

Respondents to the survey were asked why Wicklow’s heritage is important to them and were provided with a list of answer options as described in Table 1.

Table 1. The importance of heritage

Why is Wicklow's Heritage important to you? (Tick as many as apply)	
Our story/social history	83%
It enhances our environment and where we live	76%
It is an irreplaceable resource	75%
Sense of place	64%
Environmental sustainability	59%
Well-being	56%
Sense of community	55%
Economic and tourism benefits	47%
None of the above	0%

Over a quarter of respondents (27%) described additional reasons why heritage is important to them and the main theme that emerged was the value of heritage as a legacy for future generations and the importance of protecting and recording it:

“Heritage fosters a deep connection between people and their surroundings, promoting stewardship and sustainable practices. It also serves as an education resource, enriching knowledge, and appreciation of future generations.”

“It is our past history and will be lost forever if we don’t protect it.”

“It belongs to our grandchildren. It is being “consumed” and commercialised at an unsustainable rate.”

The importance of heritage and connection to place for the community was also raised by survey respondents and mentioned in some written submissions:

“Allows people to understand and connect with a place.”

“Social cohesion and capital.”

“Our built, natural and cultural heritage in Wicklow is an invaluable asset which gives us a strong sense of place, pride and belonging, and in our community, it gives us our own distinct identity.”

The economic and tourism benefits brought by heritage were also raised by survey respondents and reinforced in some written submissions:

“...the Baltinglass Hillfort Complex it’s probably one of the most undervalued historical tourist and environmental assets in County Wicklow.”

Other comments related to the importance of the County’s natural heritage in a national context:

“Wicklow is a hugely important remnant of Ireland’s formerly vast biodiversity, that, if protected properly, can act as a source population for wildlife to recover across the rest of the island of Ireland.”

The legal obligation of the Council to protect architectural heritage was also mentioned in a survey response. The importance of heritage for climate resilience was raised in a response to the survey and further elaborated on in written submissions.

Priority themes related to managing heritage and connecting people to heritage

“Protection for heritage should be as broad as possible and include historic, local, cultural, environmental, literary, or folkloric – all of which need to be protected”

Respondents to the survey were invited to give their views on priority themes for managing heritage and connecting people to heritage. The average ranking by survey respondents (one

being highest priority and 5 being lowest priority) of a range of themes is detailed in Tables 2 and 3. Respondents were also asked to identify other themes or areas that should be prioritised and 43% elaborated on their views in this regard.

Table 2. Priority themes related to managing heritage

What do you feel are the priority themes related to managing heritage? (1 is highest priority 5 is lowest priority).	Average ranking
Conserve and care for natural and cultural heritage	1.23
Inclusion of heritage considerations in local authority decision making	1.45
More focus on Wicklow’s unique heritage (buildings, oral histories, placenames, landscapes)	1.56
Managing heritage to address climate change and biodiversity loss	1.56
Providing educational resources, and guidance on heritage conservation and management	1.73
Strengthen and grow partnerships to protect heritage	1.73
Recording and researching areas of heritage that are under recorded	1.80

Table 3. Priority themes related to connecting people to heritage

What do you feel are the priority themes relating to connecting people to heritage (1 is highest priority, 5 is lowest priority).	Average ranking
Providing heritage training e.g., recording biodiversity, community archaeology, local history research	1.53
Raising awareness, celebrating, and communicating heritage	1.55
Support and build capacity within communities to actively engage with local heritage	1.65
Make heritage more accessible to all	1.85

In open ended survey responses, the most frequently raised themes related to the protection of built, cultural and natural heritage, education, engagement and awareness raising and sustainable approaches to tourism. Written submissions to the consultation also touched on these themes:

- **Protecting built heritage, both archaeological and architectural** e.g. Holy wells, ringforts, Black Castle, Baltinglass Hillfort Complex, Castletimon Dolmen (known locally as the Grave of the Princess), and the Art Deco architecture of Bray and the architectural heritage of towns and village including Greystones and Delgany.

*“Potential for UNESCO registration of the **Baltinglass Hillfort Complex**- A plan of actions that seriously addresses the potential and challenges of registration application. We have enough knowledge at this stage to say that the entire Baltinglass Hillfort Complex is so unique that it would meet the criteria for UNESCO registration.”*

- **Protecting cultural heritage** e.g. genealogy, heraldry, flags and emblems, traditional crafts and skills, written history, connecting the diaspora with their Wicklow roots, maritime heritage.

- **Protecting biodiversity and natural heritage** e.g., community gardens, rewilding, rewetting bogs, protection of trees, landscapes, and wildlife (including rescue and emergency response when oil spills or fires occur) and addressing coastal erosion and the potential impact of wind farms.
- **Engagement, education, and awareness raising** e.g. engaging young people through schools and social media, provision and enhancement of museum facilities, events, attracting new audiences, ongoing consultation, community, and stakeholder engagement.
- **Sustainable approaches to tourism** that align with priorities for protection of heritage were raised by survey respondents. The need for inclusive, and enhanced, managed access to the countryside was also raised in written submissions.

“Tourism development and planning is not just an economic activity, but it should also promote and integrate heritage conservation efforts within its processes.”

“...There is scope for connecting the area Baltinglass Hillfort Complex} to tourist assets in other parts of the county and promoting connections to the kind of long- and short-distance walking trails essential to a national strategy for high-end, low-density tourism. Such a network should be part of local and countrywide plans.”

“Avoid commercialising and trivialising Heritage. Encourage people to explore Heritage for themselves... avoid the "led-by-the-hand approach". Avoid the "tea, toilets and trinkets" approach.”

Challenges and threats to Wicklow’s heritage

The majority of survey respondents (82%) described challenges and threats they perceive to heritage in Wicklow.

Challenges related to population growth and development

Respondents to the survey perceive pressures related to population growth and development, which are causing negative impacts on biodiversity and natural heritage. Damage to SACs, felling of trees, hedgerows, loss of wildlife corridors and habitats in both urban and rural areas are causing concern.

“...The inevitable increase of building development to house the increasing population provides challenges too...”

“Pressure on our environment and special areas of conservation from inappropriate development and activities.”

“... wildlife habitats around town have been lost and with alterations to old houses and other building there is also a loss to nesting areas within towns and villages throughout

County Wicklow. This can be seen in towns like Greystones where in the last forty years the bat population plummeted and there the number of Swifts arriving has decreased, as far as I have noticed...

These issues were also highlighted in written submissions:

“Planning for new developments needs to be strongly linked to the need to preserve protected structures and identified trees, which have Tree Protection Orders, need to be fully protected, with large fines for “accidental” felling of trees...”

Development is perceived as having negative effects on the community, for example the overdevelopment of villages and towns resulting in the neglect of the needs of local people and loss of a sense of community:

“Many villages are being overdeveloped and locals are being forgotten about or neglected. Many local projects become vanity projects around election times.”

“Unsustainable growth, short-term planning, lack of initiatives to foster a greater sense of community.”

“Inappropriate development, those with money buying property reducing capacity for locals to live in communities.”

Development is also perceived as leading to loss or damage to built heritage, loss of identity and cultural heritage (e.g. placenames) in towns and villages, poor quality design and lack of a sustainable or long-term approach to development:

“Bad planning and design in new builds in our town centres leads to development of poor quality and unattractive business centres and housing. Town centres development should insist on building criteria that enhances the heritage rather than downgrading it.”

“... As towns are growing the identity of small villages within the overall larger town area are being lost ...the original village of Greystones, the village of Killincarrig, the village of Delgany, the hamlets of Blacklion and Windgate are under pressure of being lost within a greater and ever-growing town of Greystones...”

“With a growing population comes development into surrounding areas, with this comes the loss of the built heritage and the connection to old townlands and the stories and history attached to their names and origins... These old place names and townland names not just connect areas to their early history but to social, agricultural, and industrial heritage as well.”

The potential negative impact of wind farms on heritage

The impact of development of wind farms was identified as a cause of concern by some survey respondents and by groups making written submissions.

“Wind farm developments proposed in sensitive & inappropriate locations (particularly currently proposed offshore developments) are certainly the largest threat to biodiversity, landscape, and historical heritage sites in Wicklow.”

The potential impact that developing a wind farm on the Arklow Bank will have on the coastal environment was raised, with concern that the project is too big, too close to shore, could contribute to coastal erosion and impact negatively on protected sites and marine biodiversity. Another written submission expressed concern about the potential impact of wind turbines on Kilranelagh hill on the Baltinglass Hillfort Complex.

Issues relating to planning and regulation of development and protection of heritage

Some survey respondents and groups making written submissions raised issues with planning and regulation of development, lack of enforcement of measures to protect heritage assets, and the need for integrated policy (e.g. heritage, planning and development and climate resilience) in this regard.

“1. Unsustainable and inappropriate development. 2. Poor planning decisions...”

“More protection orders are needed for the built and environmental heritage (e.g. Honeybrook Cottage, house and trees in Kindlestown House) and more rigorous enforcement of protected structures is needed.”

“There is a great need to integrate all plans and policies as they are significantly interlinked e.g. under the County Development Plan properties are given protected structure status, this needs to be tied in with the Heritage Plan.”

“Due to their relative age and construction techniques used, heritage assets are usually more vulnerable to disasters such as floods and heavy rains. This not only puts the assets at risk of loss, but also the communities... Disaster risk reduction plans should also include heritage assets in their retrofitting plans.”

Challenges relating to sustainable tourism and access to heritage sites and assets

Comments from survey respondents describe conflicts between protection of heritage and tourism or recreational use and reference the unequal distribution of tourists across the county resulting in some areas such as Glendalough being oversubscribed and others such as the Baltinglass Hillfort Complex being underdeveloped.

“The monastic ruins {Glendalough} naturally make up a remarkable World Heritage Site, but it is questionable whether the nature of tourism in the area, especially its short window (and therefore relatively low-spend) aspects, and its disruptiveness, really provide the kind of returns that the local community needs and has a right to expect.”

Inaction, neglect, and inappropriate practices in relation to protection of heritage assets

The issue of inaction, and the neglect and destruction of aspects of heritage assets was raised with survey respondents citing various examples e.g. the deterioration of the condition of built heritage, loss of artefacts and associated history, lack of protection of trees, hedgerows, embankment and verges, spraying and inappropriate mowing practices (by semi-state bodies,

the Council, landowners and community-based groups) and lack of measures to address coastal erosion.

“A lot of Wicklow's heritage and history has been left uncared for too long so the financial costs to enhancing/renovating them vs any potential return has become too big of a gap and fallen too far down the list of priorities.”

“...Heritage buildings and streetscapes not being protected.”

“Lack of protection of native trees, hedgerows, plants, biodiversity. Lack of environmental overall planning and best practice by council employees in managing parks, verges, etc for wildlife and biodiversity. Community groups 'weeding' out native plants.”

“There have been cultural artifacts that have been lost to the County, items that have been in a family for generations. With the loss of the item / artifact, the story and history the item represents is lost.”

“...Complete inaction to address the severe erosion along the coastline - in Wicklow town along the Murrough and along the coast to protect the dunes in particular...”

Lack of public awareness and connection to heritage

Lack of public engagement and connection to heritage, lack of heritage education and awareness were identified as a challenge:

“Lack of visibility, communication, efforts in connecting the wider public to our unique heritage (and celebrating it together)...”

“...people's lack of understanding or interest in the heritage of our county.”

“Underdevelopment, lack of interaction/recognising it is a resource belonging to all of us which can greatly improve quality of life.”

Lack of funding or investment for heritage

Some comments reflect concern about lack of funding and investment to protect, manage and curate heritage assets and provide training:

“Funding and bureaucracy - the outer walls around Glendalough's Monastic City are crumbling, as are the Famine Walls in Laragh.”

“Lack of financial investment at county level. Compared to other counties, Wicklow has a poor record making our heritage available to the general public as in a county museum. Training courses in heritage are improving, but a great deal more needs to be done.”

Other challenges and threats

Other issues raised by respondents included negative attitudes to heritage (ignorance, apathy and vandalism), farming (pollution, grazing and fires), tourism, and loss of access to heritage sites due to privatisation of land.

Enabling people to engage with heritage

When asked what would make it easier for people to engage with Wicklow's heritage 77% of survey respondents offered a range of suggestions.

Inclusive community engagement, consultation and dialogue

A common theme in terms of enablers of engagement were measures that give a voice to the community (individual residents and groups), support and facilitate engagement and provide opportunities to be involved with heritage, e.g. regular consultation, outreach and information sessions, financial support for groups and projects.

“Listening to people’s opinions through social media and making easier for people to voice their opinions and be heard by people who have power.”

“More events like the ones held about the new Heritage Plan in the main libraries in Wicklow to be held in the smaller branch libraries.”

“... Dialogue within communities. A more publicly accessible approach to Heritage by State and Local Authorities.”

“More community and school involvement. Make heritage part of the everyday lives so they understand its part of them.”

Offer and promote a diverse programme of heritage events

Another frequently suggested way to engage people was a regular programme of events (outside of Heritage Week), such as lectures, talks, workshops, festivals, a roadshow of memories and artefacts gathered from the community, and library events on all aspects of heritage from the seasons and biodiversity to cultural heritage.

“More local events (visits, lectures etc.) by heritage personnel focusing on exclusively local themes.”

“Tours, group, outings, foraging workshops, plant and tree identification and cultural history.”

“Create small communities within the county like community gardens with heritage and biodiversity at the core of their presence... Having social events that promote heritage and biodiversity...”

“Engage with families about artifacts in their family and importance of it or the event it represents to the county. This could be a roadshow event, that an historian / archaeologist attends.”

Increased funding, capacity and resources for heritage protection and management

Some survey respondents highlighted the importance of protecting heritage in the context of enabling people to engage and the need for more funding and additional capacity for protecting

and managing heritage within the Council. These points were also raised in written submissions.

“... Improved funding for high quality Heritage protection and conservation...”

“Finance for heritage centres. More government acquisitions of important heritage buildings. In Aughrim Village many of the important heritage buildings have been permitted to fall into dereliction due to unethical private ownership.”

Additional capacity for protecting and managing heritage within the Council:

“At present, it appears that there are insufficient resources in the Wicklow County Council to effectively police and enforce regulations. As a result, developers don’t feel a real and substantive threat to actions taken that are not in accordance with the regulations, and they have taken actions that they defy them.”

“Participation and strong protection from statutory authorities who can protect and educate, including planning enforcement and incorporating heritage into all planning matters.”

“More resources and development of a West and South West Wicklow heritage office...”

“Wicklow needs a Parks Officer, A Conservation Officer and additional resources to support the Heritage Officer. These experts need to feed into and balance the planning process.”

“That the heritage and environmental officers have sub offices and monthly meetings in West and Southwest Wicklow. That the officers are responsible for delivering heritage and environmental services that are directed to the poorest and least developed sides of County Wicklow.”

Communication, information, and awareness raising

Communication, information, and awareness raising for both residents and tourists through traditional and digital media, and libraries, of all aspects of heritage including biodiversity and natural heritage was raised in both survey responses and written submissions:

“I think there is a huge engagement with heritage in Wicklow but some of it is still through oral communication, which is great but ensuring that this is not lost in future generations and is adequately communicated to incoming people is very important.”

“More information online about heritage and promotion countywide of literature, periodicals etc published by heritage groups.”

“The role of the library in relation to the history and heritage of the area is very underutilised... images of archaeological items relating to this area and heritage information about the area should be displayed in the library.”

“Greater accessibility to information on heritage matters and, in the provision of such, creating a sense of ownership and public custodianship of our county's heritage.”

Provide museum facilities

“... County Wicklow should have a museum to tell the story of the County and assist in collecting important artifacts related to the county, that may be lost to the county or the Country.”

“Investment in local museums - there is only one museum in the entire county.”

Provide heritage education through schools

“Start with education, inclusive for all age groups. Make it engaging, fun and from an early age.”

“Include it in school’s curriculum or encourage schools to do more outside the classroom.”

Improve physical access to heritage sites and assets

Improve access to heritage by making entry to state owned sites free, and by enhancing physical infrastructure and services e.g., public transport, car parks and boardwalks:

“Easy access, easy places to get to on public transport.”

“Free access to local population to all state-owned heritage sites.”

“Carparks, Board walk routes like excellent development at Glendalough.”

The importance of access was also reflected in a written submission to the consultation on enhanced, inclusive, managed access to the countryside for a range of recreational uses.

Develop heritage interpretation

Heritage interpretation in a range of engaging formats was suggested e.g., digital content (Apps, virtual tours, interactive content), signage on site and promotional campaigns.

“Telling the story of heritage in entertaining way.”

“...Highlighting a story or historical incident within a town / village or area, through visual signage or connection to website to tell story...”

“Strategic campaigns promoting the heritage of the county along with contacts for relevant sites and instructional materials on how/why to engage with a specific heritage site e.g. dogs kept on leashes/no camping in Nature Reserves.”

The importance of heritage interpretation was also reflected in a written submission to the consultation, relating to a community-led Heritage Audit with an integrated, holistic approach to local heritage identification, interpretation and signage for the Fassaroe area.

Interest in community heritage projects or training

Table 4. Interest in community heritage projects or training

Type of project/training	% Interested
Recording biodiversity e.g., birds, insects, plants	52%
Local history research	47%
Recording headstones in local graveyards	37%
Community archaeology projects e.g., digs	29%

The majority of survey respondents (83%) are interested in having opportunities for training and taking part in community heritage projects. About one third (31%) described (in open-ended responses) other sorts of heritage training projects, which would be of interested to them as follows:

Cultural heritage

- Holy Wells and rural traditions.
- Oral history projects to capture and preserve community stories.
- Training in traditional craft and skill.
- Plant and tree folklore - traditional uses and general information.
- Genealogy, heraldry, and vexillology.
- Place names, mapping names and details of areas.
- Folklore and fieldname recording.

Built heritage

- Industrial Heritage (Wicklow has a great industrial heritage, with boat / ship building, mining, quarrying brick making amongst other areas which should be recorded and discussed more).
- Restoration training on dry stone walling.
- More preservation of built heritage in towns.
- Development of the Baltinglass Hillfort Complex.
- Information on historic buildings (Tours around places of interest, public talks).

Biodiversity / Natural heritage

- Providing workshops and training on biodiversity, community resilience and climate action.

- Wildlife First Response, and Oiled Wildlife First Response (respondent is trained in this) and direct action to support wildlife.
- Contributing to biodiversity projects (e.g. planting),

Curation and communication

- Development of museums.
- Software, GIS and data acquisition, and present info in an all-age group accessible way.
- Video of stories.
- Local history publications.

Key themes and issues raised in the pre-draft consultation

This section gives an overview of the key issues raised in the pre-draft consultation for the County Wicklow Heritage Plan 2025-2029, drawing on the results of the consultation survey and the written submissions received from individuals, community groups, and non-governmental or not for profit organisations.

Why is Heritage important?

Participants in the pre-draft consultation survey regard heritage as important for a host of reasons with the highest proportion choosing those related to our story or social history (83%), and the fact that heritage is an irreplaceable, finite resource (75%), which enhances where we live (76%). The main theme that emerged in additional comments was the importance of heritage as a legacy for future generations and the need to protect and record it.

A smaller proportion (over half) of survey respondents felt heritage was important for sense of place, environmental sustainability, well-being, and a sense of community. The economic and tourism benefits of heritage were regarded as important by a slightly smaller cohort (47%).

Priority themes for the heritage plan

In terms of ranking priority themes for the next Plan conservation and care of heritage was selected by a large majority of survey respondents with 80% ranking this a highest priority area.

Some described priorities relating to protecting built heritage, including archaeological assets such as holy wells, ringforts and specific sites like the Baltinglass Hillfort Complex, and the architectural heritage of towns and villages such as Bray, Greystones and Delgany.

Others described protecting biodiversity through for example, rewilding, rewetting bogs, protection of trees, landscapes and wildlife, and addressing coastal erosion.

Prioritising the protection of aspects of cultural heritage from genealogy, heraldry, and traditional crafts and skills to maritime heritage was also raised. A number of written submissions to the consultation also highlighted the need for protection of specific heritage sites or assets including Castletimon Dolmen, the Arklow Bank and environs. A heritage trail was proposed for Fassaroe to foster a sense of place and provide heritage walks and areas of interest for education and tourism.

Inclusion of heritage considerations in local authority decision making was ranked as highest priority by over two thirds of survey respondents. More of a focus on Wicklow's unique heritage, and the issues of climate change and biodiversity loss were also seen as highest priority areas for a significant proportion of survey respondents (59% and 60% respectively).

Sustainable approaches to tourism and recreational use that align with priorities for protection of heritage and enhanced, inclusive, managed access to heritage sites were raised in both survey responses and written submissions.

The provision of educational resources, guidance on heritage conservation and management, and recording and researching areas of heritage that are under recorded were ranked highest priority by a lower but nonetheless significant cohort (53% and 51% respectively). Strengthening and growing partnerships to protect heritage was ranked as highest priority by just under half (48%).

In terms of connecting people to heritage the themes most frequently ranked as high priority were providing heritage training opportunities, raising awareness, and celebrating, and communicating heritage (ranked as a highest priority area by 61%).

Supporting and building capacity within communities to actively engage with local heritage and making heritage more accessible to all were seen as highest priority by a slightly lower number of respondents (56% and 48% respectively).

Survey respondents elaborated on the themes of engagement, education, and awareness raising. Suggestions were offered in relation to engaging young people through schools and social media; provision of museum facilities; offering heritage events; attracting new audiences; facilitating ongoing consultation and community and stakeholder engagement.

Challenges and threats to heritage

The majority of survey respondents (82%) gave their views on the main challenges or threats they perceive to Wicklow's heritage. The most frequently raised issues related to the threats posed by population growth and development including construction of housing and wind farms. Concern was expressed about the negative impacts development is having on communities, architectural heritage in towns and villages, and on biodiversity, marine ecosystems and landscapes. The need to ensure that statutorily protected buildings and other vernacular architecture are protected sufficiently during development was highlighted. These concerns were also reflected in written submissions.

Among the specific issues raised in relation to natural heritage were threats to Special Areas of Conservation, coastal erosion, felling of trees and hedgerows, loss of wildlife corridors and habitats in both urban and rural areas. Inappropriate management practices are also perceived as negatively impacting biodiversity by some (e.g. spraying chemicals and mowing regimes, weeding, damage to trees and hedgerows).

Concerns were voiced about development leading to a loss of sense of community, identity and cultural heritage in towns and villages (e.g. placenames and the stories of the associated people and local history).

Inaction, neglect, or destruction of aspects of heritage including loss or deterioration of the condition of built heritage, and loss of historical artefacts and associated history are also seen as an issue.

Conflicts between protection of heritage and the right to managed access to the countryside for recreational use were described, with concern about some sites experiencing negative impacts due to high visitor numbers while others are perceived as underdeveloped as a resource for the locality.

Issues with planning and regulation of development and enforcement of measures to protect heritage assets were raised as was the need for integrated policy for heritage, planning and development, and climate action. Lack of funding and investment to protect, manage and curate heritage assets was highlighted by some.

The issue of Insufficient public engagement, education and awareness and negative attitudes to heritage (e.g. apathy, ignorance and vandalism) were also raised.

Other issues identified included loss of access to heritage sites due to privatisation, negative impacts of farming (e.g. pollution, over grazing and fires), coastal erosion, and climate change.

Enabling people to engage with heritage

When asked what would make it easier for people to engage with Wicklow's heritage a common theme was inclusive engagement, consultation and dialogue that gives a voice to the community and offers a chance to be involved through for example, outreach and information sessions, and financial support for local groups and projects.

Having a diverse, regular programme of local events exploring and celebrating all aspects of heritage was another frequently raised theme in the context of enabling engagement (e.g. talks, workshops, festivals, roadshows and library events).

The role of heritage education programmes through schools, effective communication and awareness raising, and access to information relating to heritage were highlighted.

A written submission was received on the future of Arklow Maritime Museum as a venue for education, culture and tourism (the need for development of museum facilities was also raised through the survey).

Some survey respondents highlighted the importance of protecting heritage (in the context of enabling people to engage with it) and the need for more funding and additional capacity for protecting and managing heritage within the Council. These points were echoed in some written submissions.

The importance of access to and interpretation of heritage as enablers of engagement was reflected in a number of written submissions to the consultation. While one proposed a community-led heritage audit with a holistic approach to local heritage identification, interpretation and signage, another advocated for enhanced, inclusive, managed access to the countryside for a range of recreational uses. Improved access to heritage sites (e.g. free entry to state owned sites, public transport, car parks and boardwalks) and provision of interpretation of heritage assets (both digitally and on site) were identified as enablers of engagement by some survey respondents.

Interest in community heritage projects or training

The majority of respondents (83%) are interesting in having opportunities to take part in community heritage training and projects, with strongest interest in recording biodiversity (52%), followed by local history research (47%). There is interest (to a slightly lesser extent) in recording headstones (37%) and community archaeology (29%). Respondents described a diverse range of additional heritage training projects, which would be of interest to them. These include recording oral history and capturing community stories, restoration of dry-stone walls, climate action, wildlife emergency response, and digital skills to present heritage data in accessible ways.

Appendix 1 . Open ended responses to survey questions

Any identifying details included in responses have been omitted.

Other reasons that heritage is important to respondents
There is a legal obligation to protect heritage. In the case architectural heritage this responsibility lies directly with the local authority.
Record of the past for future generations.
Nature and biodiversity
02 Customs and traditions have changed so much in last 30-40 years, technology... great need to record life as it was from people over 60, 70's etc.
Keep the heritage story alive for generations to come.
Heritage fosters a deep connection between people and their surroundings, promoting stewardship and sustainable practices. It also serves as an education resource, enriching knowledge, and appreciation of future generations.
It teaches future children about a world they are likely to know nothing of.
Allows people to understand and connect with a place.
Protecting our legacy for future generations.
It is our past history and will be lost forever if we don't protect it.
Preservation is always positive in the current society.
Employment directly and indirectly. Heritage knowledge is also science based advancing current knowledge.
It belongs to our grandchildren. It is being " consumed" and commercialised at an unsustainable rate.
To help protect the environment. To not forget the past history.
Social cohesion and capital.
Wicklow is a hugely important remnant of Ireland's formerly vast biodiversity, that, if protected properly, can act as a source population for wildlife to recover across the rest of the island of Ireland.
Heritage tourism is at the heart of what we do...
Climate resilience.
...the Baltinglass Hillfort Complex it's probably one of the most undervalued historical, tourist and environmental assets in County Wicklow.
Essential to life.

Would you like to suggest any other area/theme to be included in the Plan?
It would be beneficial to see equality within the plan in terms of archaeological, architectural, and natural heritage.
Rectifying the exclusion of written history from the definition of heritage and from heritage plans.
Holy wells of Wicklow could be an area of study. Customs that reflect rural way of life. Lack of enthusiasm. History not on the curriculum of every secondary school. Local history and cultural heritage not on agenda - maybe projects could be put in place for transition year.
Introduce at Primary School level.
* promoting sustainable tourism that leverages heritage sites without compromising their integrity * Enhance digital accessibility of heritage resources to reach a broader audience thus removing on site pressures.
Consult with locals or residents, consider them before thinking about tourists as it impacts them daily
A historical club would be great.
If you want younger engagement in their heritage, then you must meet them on social media platforms not websites.
Community Gardens.

Would you like to suggest any other area/theme to be included in the Plan?

Biodiversity priorities: rewilding, rewetting bogs, more native trees, prevent existing trees being cut down, MPA off the coast of Wicklow. Some specific projects around Bray: Restoring the beautiful building near the rail crossing next to the stadium - not knocking it down for more apartments! Restoring the beautiful building on the seafront next to the gelateria - not allowing it to be knocked down and replaced with another casino! Finally, Bray is a beacon in Ireland for Art Deco architecture - how can it be protected, but also made more visible and promoted around the country?

Provide an active protection to ancient monuments located in isolated areas.

The preservation of the Black castle and the Murrough in Wicklow Town is incredibly important.

Creating a series of short films on the architecture of Wicklow, bringing to life the history within their walls. Reviving main streets to make them habitable.

I believe that WCC should carry out a landscape analysis and assess proposed developments in respect if that baseline analysis. Also, the above question related to climate & biodiversity loss should be separated, while connected themes, proposed changes can benefit one and not the other.

Our genealogical, heraldic and vexillological (flags and emblems) heritage. Genealogy connects people to the county's history and heritage; Heraldry is used throughout the county by organisations, clubs, schools, businesses etc - all reflecting people, place, and identity; Vexillology (flags and emblems) are flown throughout the county - identity to place and community. Promoting an awareness, appreciation, and knowledge of the county's genealogical, heraldic and vexillological heritage should be included as an objective.

Heritage education in schools/curriculum.

Regular open forums and opportunities to engage with decision makers. Increased information all the time, not just when the heritage Plan is being developed.

The development of a county museum or modular museum in various parts of the county rather than a single centralised venue.

Gathering local knowledge.

Avoid commercialising and trivialising Heritage. Encourage people to explore Heritage for themselves.... avoid the "led-by-the-hand approach". Avoid the "tea, toilets and trinkets" approach.

Traditional skills and crafts Attracting new audiences for heritage.

Awareness campaigns for the sustainable/least impactful ways to engage with our natural heritage.

Connecting the diaspora with their south Wicklow roots.

Heritage officer needs to be proactive and engage with communities .

Citizen science, research talks, sustainable guided nature walks.

Yes. Written history. Oral history is now mentioned above. Why is written history excluded?

Potential for UNESCO registration of the Baltinglass Hillfort Complex- A plan of actions that seriously addresses the potential and challenges of registration application. We have enough knowledge at this stage to say that the entire Baltinglass Hillfort Complex is so unique that it would meet the criteria for UNESCO registration.

Develop the Baltinglass Hillfort complex look at the possibilities for UNESCO registry.

Protection for Wildlife, consideration for wildlife in the planning process, a plan for wildlife when there is an Oil Spill. A plan for wildlife for when there is wild fires.

More engagement between the community and its built heritage and the importance of the streetscapes and how the urban landscape reflects social change, cultural heritage and is a link to a community's identity. Also, north Wicklow has a great maritime history, with a vast array of wrecks off its coastline. Most of the maritime history in Wicklow is focused around Wicklow Town and Arklow and therefore the north east of the counties maritime history is being forgotten. Especially in Greystones, where the town has changed from a very important fishing village to a suburb of Dublin. Also, the wildlife and the bio diversity of north county Wicklow is much threatened with over fishing, proposed wind turbines, more fires each year on Bray Head and other areas and also Bird Flu, which is still a threat. More measure should be considered such as Swift Bricks, and alternative housing for bats as the older building stock are updated, with attic conversions and replacement fascia boards etc. Greystones was the original home of the IWC which is today the Bird Watch Ireland, and I believe Greystones should be a leading light in how towns grow with wildlife and nature at the heart of this growth, such as tree planting, areas left for wildlife and planted to assist wildlife etc.

Would you like to suggest any other area/theme to be included in the Plan?
This area is included above but needs immediate attention - we need to protect ringforts, which are rapidly disappearing.
Actively engage with other stakeholders in protecting our unique natural and built heritage in the county.

What do you think are the main challenges or threats facing Wicklow's Heritage?
Under-investment.
Giving planning permission to building things in places that should be protected.
Inappropriate development, those with money buying property reducing capacity for locals to live in communities.
Housing developments on the areas next to SACs where they will affect the hydrology, (e.g. Knocksink SAC), or wildlife corridors where developers destroy native hedgerows and felling large trees. Buildings owned by the by {organisation} which have left to fall into dereliction.
Educational talks at school level and in libraries. Talk to senior citizens groups, maybe ICA etc.
Development- Preservation.
* Development pressures leading to the loss of heritage sites and materials * Insufficient public awareness and engagement (particularly young) * erosion of traditional skill and knowledge * Climate change impacting natural and built heritage.
Many villages are being overdeveloped and locals are being forgotten about or neglected. Many locals projects become vanity projects around election times.
Climate change.
Ignorance.
Underdevelopment lack of interaction/recognising it is a resource belonging to all of us which can greatly improve quality of life.
Unsustainable growth, short-term planning, lack of initiatives to foster a greater sense of community.
Over development of natural spaces, no clear plan on sustainable living in our county. Lack of awareness of heritage and natural environment.
Vandalism and theft.
Climate change. Building.
Making decisions based on money rather than the desire to protect and conserve valuable heritage, history, and nature. The lack of recognition of the power, value, and importance of heritage.
Lack of awareness about the importance of heritage and biodiversity leading to loss and lack of links. There are a lot of individuals, groups and organisations that work to improve and educate about heritage (including me!). I would love to be involved in supporting our plans by provision of services.
Loss of various important built heritage, with many buildings being demolished or much altered. The streetscapes are being much altered as the population of Wicklow grows and society changes, with the loss of old shop fronts etc. Also, wildlife habitats around town have been lost and with alterations to old house and other building there is also a loss to nesting areas within towns and villages throughout County Wicklow. This can be seen in towns like Greystones where in the last forty years the bat population plummeted and there the number of Swifts arriving has decreased, as far as I have noticed. There have been cultural artifacts that have been lost to the County, items that have been in a family for generations. With the loss of the item / artifact, the story and history the item represents is lost.
Lack of care.
The fact that building as much houses and fitting as many people as possible in to our communities without taking any consideration to what toll it has on our natural surroundings and communities.
Towns in Wicklow are losing their sense of place. We need a strategy of reviving towns as places to live in i.e. refurbishing shops with live in accommodation - reclaiming the towns and breathing new life into them.
Felling of mature trees along hedgerows by landowners and state/semi-state bodies. Commercial non-native forestry and its impact on the landscape and heritage sites. One-off houses.

What do you think are the main challenges or threats facing Wicklow's Heritage?
Lack of visibility, communication, efforts in connecting the wider public to our unique heritage (and celebrating it together). Effects of this are seen in our (public) architecture and urban planning which is in no way connected or respecting of our landscape, unique beauty, and human connection. But are instead often focused on creating ugly, "modern", copy-pasted, anonymised public spaces which we don't care about preserving (or using).
Pressure on our environment and special areas of conservation from inappropriate development and activities.
Wind farm developments proposed in sensitive & inappropriate locations (particularly currently proposed offshore developments) are certainly the largest threat to biodiversity, landscape, and historical heritage sites in Wicklow.
Inaction on, or the slow implementation of, heritage plans and conservation objectives. Lack of public education on heritage matters.
Funding and bureaucracy - the outer walls around Glendalough's Monastic City are crumbling, as are the Famine Walls in Laragh.
Lack of awareness of the importance of biodiversity - particularly amongst landowners/farmers and county council workers and sub-contractors who destroy hedgerows, trees, embankments at the most crucial time of year and who insist on using weedkiller at roundabouts and along paths. Inconsistent messages from council. The ridiculous work of the council making 'safe' access for all (particularly tourists who visit for 6 weeks of the year) thereby destroying grassy banks to create concrete paths, put in traffic lights that are never used and a plethora signage at huge cost to the detriment of the area and the annoyance of the residents who pay the property tax. Complete inaction to address the severe erosion along the coastline - in Wicklow town along the Murrough and along the coast to protect the dunes in particular. Allowing wind turbines to be erected the length of the coast at the cost of so much wildlife. Overcrowding of heritage sites with no visible action to curtail and limit the numbers.
Lack of financial investment at county level. Compared to other counties, Wicklow has a poor record making our heritage available to the general public as in a county museum. Training courses in heritage are improving, but a great deal more needs to be done.
Heritage is very susceptible to damage/graffiti, etc, opening everything is not fully safe in today's culture.
Overexposure of the built Heritage as commercialised tourist destinations. The impact of day trippers.
Pollution, destruction of natural habitats, farming, lack of protection for, and promotion of, trees and native hedgerows, lack of protection for built heritage - not just individual old buildings but whole heritage streetscapes like Bray Seafront, Bray Main Street. Tidy Towns and local authority removal and killing of local wildflowers and native plants in local public areas, parks, and streetscapes, on old walls and bridges. Lack of joined-up local authority action to ensure protection of trees, hedgerows, wildflowers, and habitats for wildlife and to actively ensure biodiversity and wildlife-friendly rewilded areas in our towns and villages as well as country roads. Stop the 'weeding'!
Not enough awareness or education of its significance and influence on our present day lives.
Sheep, deer, and farming pollution.
Development and people's lack of understanding or interest in the heritage of our county.
Privatisation of land resulting in loss of public access to natural and cultural heritage.
Housing/development pressure, lack of appreciation of vulnerability of aspects of heritage. TOURISM and recreational projects which conflict with protecting existing biodiversity.
Irresponsible activities on heritage sites (human impacts on protected sites).
Population/Visitor Growth and increased unmanaged access to our heritage assets.
Some areas that either have been left to long or potential places that need improvement and support in keeping heritage and history of locations safe and remembered.
The demise of famine cottages on farmers' land. - The costs involved in refurbishing {Location}.
Bad planning and design in new builds in our town centres leads to development of poor quality and unattractive business centres and housing. Town centres development should insist on building criteria that enhances the heritage rather than downgrading it.
Lack of funding and management.
Over development, lack of funding, climate change.

What do you think are the main challenges or threats facing Wicklow's Heritage?
Lack of protection of native trees, hedgerows, plants, biodiversity. Lack of environmental overall planning and best practice by council employees in managing parks, verges, etc for wildlife and biodiversity. Community groups 'weeding' out native plants. Grazing by sheep. Land-owners setting fire to land. Nitrates and pollution from farming. Heritage buildings and streetscapes not being protected.
This requires an essay! However, I'll just mention the effect of erosion and weathering on buildings here.
Lack of resources to support and develop the opportunities that exist example distribution of higher numbers of tourists from East to West and South West Wicklow. This requires heritage and environmental officials based at least part time in the West of the County.
Over emphasis on tourism in east Wicklow and lack of infrastructure and development of West Wicklow especially the Baltinglass area. The opportunity to distribute tourism to other areas is unfortunately lacking as the geography of Country Wicklow has become an obstacle to even handed economic and environmental opportunities. One glaring example is the opportunity to develop the Baltinglass Hillfort Complex if this unique Neolithic landscape was in East Wicklow this would not happen it would be developed even though east Wicklow has the vast majority of tourism development.
Apathy.
Rampant, poorly planned developments. Greystones harbour has been destroyed. Please ensure vacant properties are used, build sustainable and environmentally friendly homes, consider the long term.
Competing demands that override heritage/ env requirements. Finances, resources, differing agendas. Apathy.
Development, climate change, ignorance/lack of awareness/care, lack of funding.
Lack of funding.
Lack of engagement, lack of funding for conservation.
Wicklow's heritage is being gradually eroded, with its built heritage in particularly in the north of the county being much altered and in some cases being lost to future generations. With the loss of the built heritage comes the loss of identity and the loss of cultural heritage or social heritage that was embedded in the locality. As towns are growing the identity of small villages within the overall larger town area are being lost this can be seen in areas such as Greystones where historic village cores such as the original village of Greystones, the village of Killincarrig, the village of Delgany, the hamlets of Blacklion and Windgate are under pressure of being lost within a greater and ever-growing town of Greystones. This includes loss of the original village centre and the green spaces which separated them. It is important that these villages and their individual histories and identities are not lost within the greater urban area of Greystones. This is not just a Greystones issue, but also can be seen in Bray in areas such as the Vevay. Coastal areas such as Greystones and its surrounding area has some of the most important wildlife habitats, such as Bray Head and the coastline between Greystones and Newcastle, with its fen lands. These are a rich in wildlife, with barn owls, kestrels, ringed plovers, badgers etc. A plan should be in place to protect these areas and ensure that tourism and other industry or agriculture do not disturb the wildlife, their habitat and flight paths. Also creating safe viewing areas to encourage locals to see and appreciate what is on their doorstep.
1. Unsustainable and inappropriate development. 2. Poor planning decisions. 3. Disparity between heritage/biodiversity aspirations and the actions of other Co Co sections e.g., roads det, (spraying, inappropriate mowing, gouging roadside holes annually in different places along one roadside.)
Lack of resources, especially in the face of climate change.
A lot of Wicklow's heritage and history has been left uncared for too long so the financial costs to enhancing/renovating them vs any potential return has become too big of a gap and fallen too far down the list of priorities.
Unregulated destruction of natural and built environment... e.g. felling of native trees and removal of buildings traditionally used by nesting birds. The inevitable increase of building development to house the increasing population provides challenges too.
Development, climate change, funding to protect heritage sites.
Poor decision making within the development management process.
No guarantee of funding for long term projects. protection of heritage sites against development.

What would make it easier for people to engage with Wicklow's heritage?
More local events (visits, lectures etc.) by heritage personnel focusing on exclusively local themes.
Listening to people's opinions through social media and making easier for people to voice their opinions and be heard by people who have power.
Awareness of all aspects.
More events like the ones held about the new Heritage Plan in the main libraries in Wicklow to be held in the smaller branch libraries.
Specific projects that need a time limited piece of work.
* enhanced digital platforms providing virtual tours and interactive content * A Wicklow heritage Museum & exhibition space (e.g. Galway City) * Improve signage /info material at heritage sites (branded, as exemplified through the rolled-out village interpretive panels.
Consult with all residents and local groups.
Easy access, easy places to get to on public transport.
Telling the story of heritage in entertaining way.
Tours group outings foraging workshops plant and tree identification and cultural history.
Not sure.
Create small communities within the county like community gardens with heritage and biodiversity at the core of their presence. Educating children in schools about Wicklow heritage. Having social events that promote heritage and biodiversity. Giving people a voice engaging them in the preservation of Wicklow's amazing heritage.
An app for the area, signage, education at school level.
Keep people Informed on everything. Communication very important.
More public events all over the county, visibly promoted. Communication about heritage in local news e.g. if a planning application is upheld, communicating the role of heritage in that decision.
Accessibility and free opportunities to get involved.
Free access to local population to all state-owned heritage sites. County Wicklow should have a museum to tell the story of the County and assist in collecting important artifacts related to the county, that may be lost to the county or the Country. Engage with families about artifacts in their family and importance of it or the event it represents to the county. This could be a roadshow event, that an historian / archaeologist attends. Highlighting a story or historical incident within a town / village or area, through visual signage or connection to website to tell story. This would help public to engage with its past. A lot of buildings tell a story either cultural, social, or architectural and these stories can be researched by the public. More information on townlands throughout Wicklow, as the names of townlands tell more about an area than is obvious.
Community involvement.
Events like the culture week that used to happen in Wicklow Town many years ago and maybe historical festival events around the county.
A more cohesive information joining up Wicklow Tourism with Heritage and Biodiversity. Local Tourism should be for everyone not just aimed at tourists from abroad. Workshops on the arts & crafts of the past.
Public events, in particular events which mark/ celebrate the passing seasons. Festivals similar to these are ubiquitous in most European countries, but not for us. St. Patrick's is the only community celebration we have (aside from religious or sport events). Focusing on seasonality is a wonderful way to connect ourselves back to the rhythm of time, especially as most of our lives are unrelentingly similar day-in day-out, unlike our ancestor's.
Better communication and awareness of the need for, and benefits of, protecting and enhancing our natural and cultural heritage.
I think there is a huge engagement with heritage in Wicklow but some of it is still through oral communication, which is great but ensuring that this is not lost in future generations and is adequately communicated to incoming people is very important. We tend IMO to focus on traditional people based historical heritage and are good at that but quite poor at communication of natural heritage. What did the landscape, seascape and biodiversity look like before or during early human development? What does restoration really look like? What have we changed and what has been the impacts.
Greater accessibility to information on heritage matters and, in the provision of such, creating a sense of ownership and public custodianship of our county's heritage.

What would make it easier for people to engage with Wicklow's heritage?
More visible information.
Investment in local museums - there is only one museum in the entire county.
Knowledge and natural curiosity. Accurate and relevant information most important.
A school module. Dialogue within communities. A more publicly accessible approach to Heritage by State and Local Authorities. Improved funding for high quality Heritage protection and conservation. An understanding by everyone of the fragility of all forms of Heritage.
Library events raising awareness Carparks Board walk routes like excellent development at Glendalough.
The awareness of it.
More community and school involvement. Make heritage part of the everyday lives so they understand its part of them.
Clear signage/information about certain heritage sites.
More resources dedicated by national government to loc. Authorities to run dedicated heritage teams
Strategic campaigns promoting the heritage of the county along with contacts for relevant sites and instructional materials on how/why to engage with a specific heritage site e.g. dogs kept on leashes/no camping in Nature Reserves.
A better, stronger network.
Interactive resources and a County Heritage Museum/Centre.
When local societies can be given a chance to promote themselves but also in encouraging interest in elements of heritage.
In our experience people engage really well with the history of the {Location} when we host history events in {Location}. Local and North American interest. We are grateful for the support of Wicklow County Council in all that we do.
Finance for heritage centres. More government acquisitions of important heritage buildings. In Aughrim Village many of the important heritage buildings have been permitted to fall into dereliction due to unethical private ownership.
Regular heritage events.
Ensure it's preserved.
Another essay required! Living in Dunlavin, I'll just mention that a centralised location for archives and local studies would be good.
More resources and development of a West and South West Wicklow heritage office. Engagement with and financial support for local development groups.
That the heritage and environmental officers have sub offices and monthly meetings in West and Southwest Wicklow. That the officers are responsible for delivering heritage and environmental services that are directed to the poorest and least developed sides of County Wicklow.
Local heritage centre ms re opening Bray Heritage centre for example. The length of time it has been closed is a testimony to intransigence at local level.
Clear support and guidelines. Bray Swan Sanctuary is one of the best ways for people to engage Wicklow's heritage, and yet, the Council supports its destruction.
Think lots of ways for people to engage in a variety of ways. Some excellent initiatives...prob utilised more fully by the already " converted".
participation and strong protection from statutory authorities who can protect and educate, including planning enforcement and incorporating heritage into all planning matters.
Working on projects in local communities.
Start with education, inclusive for all age groups. Make it engaging, fun and from an early age.
Greater public transport facilities.
A higher profile in local areas like the libraries in this consultation, on a few occasions throughout the year or local community centres would help increase contact and encourage people to be invested in their County heritage.
More information online about heritage and promotion countywide of literature, periodicals etc published by heritage groups.
More outreach/education/information sessions.

What would make it easier for people to engage with Wicklow's heritage?

More school involvement to engage with the future generations. More free heritage events available outside of Heritage week.
With a growing population comes development into surrounding areas, with this comes the loss of the built heritage and the connection to old townlands and the stories and history attached to their names and origins. Also, areas within townlands named after people associated with the area such as in Greystones Darcy field for example. If you go through Liam Prices notebooks these areas are very present. These old place names and townland names not just connect areas to their early history but to social, agricultural, and industrial heritage as well. In towns or villages, the old names associated with areas with the town or village are also being lost, such as in Greystones Doyle's Corner, Railway Place and in Delgany, Factory Square. More could be done to preserve these old place names and keep them alive, as new communities within the town are built.
Include it in school's curriculum or encourage schools to do more outside the classroom.
More education at school level about nearby history and heritage sites.

Are you interested in taking part in any of the following types of community heritage project or training? (you can tick more than one)

Local history publications.
Already doing (local history research).
Holy Wells and rural traditions.
* Oral history projects to capture and preserve community stories* training in traditional craft and skill.
Not interested in training, money should be wisely used to protect local landmarks and biodiversity.
Video of stories.
Plant and tree folklore traditional uses and general information.
Information on historic buildings, contributing to biodiversity projects (e.g. planting), Tours around places of interest, public talks.
Providing workshops and training on biodiversity, community resilience and climate action.
Industrial Heritage - Wicklow has a great industrial heritage, with boat / ship building, mining, quarrying brick making amongst other areas which should be recorded and discussed more.
Genealogy, heraldry, and vexillology.
Restoration training on dry stone walling etc.
Development of museums.
Software, GIS and data acquisition, and present info in an all-age group accessible way.
Anything about place names and mapping names and details of areas.
Folklore and fieldname recording.
We would not have time to engage in other initiatives as we are rather busy with returning diaspora.
More preservation of built heritage in towns.
Integrated teams of Ecologists, Archaeologists, Conservation Architects, etc.
Publications.
We are interested in a role in the development of the Baltinglass Hillfort Complex.
I teach Wildlife First Response, and Oiled Wildlife First Response. I did the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group's training in Wicklow Harbour. I am very interested in direct action to support wildlife. While all other forms of heritage are important, it is wildlife that is most threatened and therefore, should be the immediate priority.

Appendix 2. Heritage Plan Pre-draft Consultation Contributors

Donard Imaal History, as a member of ICAN

Wicklow Uplands Council

Understory

Genealogical Society of Ireland and its Specialist Branches - Heraldry Ireland and Vexillology Ireland

Coollattin Canadian Connection

Save Wicklow's Ancient East

Greystones Town Team

Arklow Maritime Museum

Delgany Community Council

South East Coastal Protection Alliance DAC

Keep Ireland Open

Tessa Stewart and Rosemary Warner

William Hourie

Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Geological Survey of Ireland

The Heritage Council

Inland Fisheries Ireland