



An Roinn Cultúir,
Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta
Department of Culture,
Heritage and the Gaeltacht

Annual Report 2019

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Focal ón Aire

It is my pleasure to introduce this Annual Report, looking back on 2019, a year in which the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and its staff continued to progress the delivery of commitments across a broad and challenging brief.

I wish to extend my thanks to the management and staff of the Department for their ongoing commitment and professionalism that made this another successful year for the Department.

This was the year that Biodiversity took its place at the heart of Government Policy with the holding of the first National Biodiversity Conference and the allocation of funding for an accelerated programme of peatland restoration and conservation works and other conservation and biodiversity programmes including investment in our National Parks.

Our cultural and creative sectors continued to play an important part in showcasing Ireland both at home and abroad. With its ever evolving and innovative programme, Creative Ireland played an integral role in promoting and advancing culture and creativity. The creation of *Le Chéile* - a new Open Youth Orchestra of Ireland made up exclusively of musicians with disabilities was a particular highlight of the year as was the launch of the programme for Galway 2020. A further personal highlight was the appointment under the Global Ireland Initiative, of five Cultural Ambassadors - Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara, Martin Hayes, Paul Muldoon and Ruth Negga - to work with Culture Ireland to increase the impact of Irish arts globally.

I am also pleased to see further progress being achieved under the 5 year Implementation Plan for the 20 year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030, with the approval of 3 new language plans. Another welcome development was the purchase by the Department of **Aerfort Chonamara** which will underpin the sustainability of air services to the Aran Islands and secure this important transport link for visitors and islanders alike.

When one reads this Annual Report one cannot but be reminded of the overwhelming diversity of its remit and the scale of its contribution to our society. It has been an honour for my colleague Minister of State, Seán Kyne T.D., and myself to work with such a committed team to progress the work of the Department in 2019 and I look forward to the continuation of this work into the future.

Josephine Madigan

*Josephine Madigan, T.D.
Minister for Culture, Heritage and the
Gaeltacht*



Focal ón Ard-Rúnaí

The year under review was both challenging and rewarding for all units of the Department as we entered the second year of implementing the goals and delivering on the respective objectives set out in the Statement of Strategy 2018-2020.

I would again like to thank Minister Madigan and An tAire Stáit, Seán Kyne for their leadership and commitment in delivering on a challenging agenda across the vast portfolios of Culture, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.

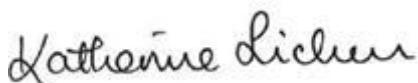
I trust that any reader of this report will gain an understanding of the value and importance of the wide-reaching remit of the Department - and the impact of our work both within Ireland and internationally. We continue to implement new initiatives to progress the achievement of our goals in relation to Arts, Culture, the Irish language and our islands, and the preservation of our rich heritage.

Amongst the many highlights of the year were:

- The ongoing progress of the Creative Ireland Programme with the success of Cruinniú na nÓg and the establishment of the National Creativity Fund;
- The inaugural *Creative Schools Week* took place during the week of 4th to 8th November 2019 in schools and venues across the country;
- The continuation of the Cultural Digitisation Scheme;
- The opening of a new book repository at the National Library of Ireland under the National Cultural Institutions Investment Programme;
- The community-led commemorations of the Soloheadbeg Ambush as part of the Decade of Centenaries;
- The launch of Ireland's National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage;
- The hosting of the first National Biodiversity Conference – “*Seeds for Nature*”;
- The success of Heritage Week, with over 2,000 events attended by over 423,000 people;
- The release by the National Monuments Service of new editions of satellite imagery, resulting in an almost doubling of annual figures of new Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) entries;
- The securing of substantial funding from the EU LIFE programme for two projects – LIFE “Wild Atlantic Nature” and “CREXLIFE”;
- The success of “ObSERVE” project, a collaboration with the Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment, which received a Civil Service Excellence and Innovation Award;
- The purchase of Aerfort Chonamara which will provide greater certainty as to the future of the air services to the Aran Islands; and
- The provision of significant financial support to community groups in the Gaeltacht as part of the Gaeltacht Language Planning Process and to support Irish-Language Networks established outside the Gaeltacht.

The above achievements are a testament to the hard work, initiative and teamwork of the staff throughout the Department. I wish to extend my appreciation for the continued commitment to public service and the professionalism shown on a daily basis by my colleagues throughout the country.

While it is clear that there are challenging times ahead for the Department and the sectors we serve, I am confident that we will continue to develop our capabilities as we work with our stakeholders and colleagues across the public sector to deliver strong results across the breadth of our remit.



Katherine Licken
Ard-Rúnaí



The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

Remit of the Department

The Department supports the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht in the discharge of her powers, duties and functions, as provided for by legislation enacted by the Oireachtas. The Minister has responsibility for a wide range of policies and services which impact on the lives of our citizens and the people of Ireland.

The principal functions of the Department are:

- to promote and provide policy and funding support for the development of the arts, culture and creativity, including cultural infrastructure development;
- to provide support to Ireland's National Cultural Institutions;
- to conserve, protect, manage and present Ireland's built and natural heritage, including the conservation of wildlife, promotion of the conservation of biological diversity, and protection of national monuments in State care;
- to support the Irish language and strengthen its use as the principal community language of the Gaeltacht;
- to assist in the sustainable development of island communities, including through the provision of transport links; and
- to promote North-South co-operation through the work of Waterways Ireland and An Foras Teanga.

Mission of the Department

The mission of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht is:

to promote, nurture and develop Ireland's arts, culture and heritage; to support and promote use of the Irish language and to facilitate the development of the Gaeltacht and the Islands.

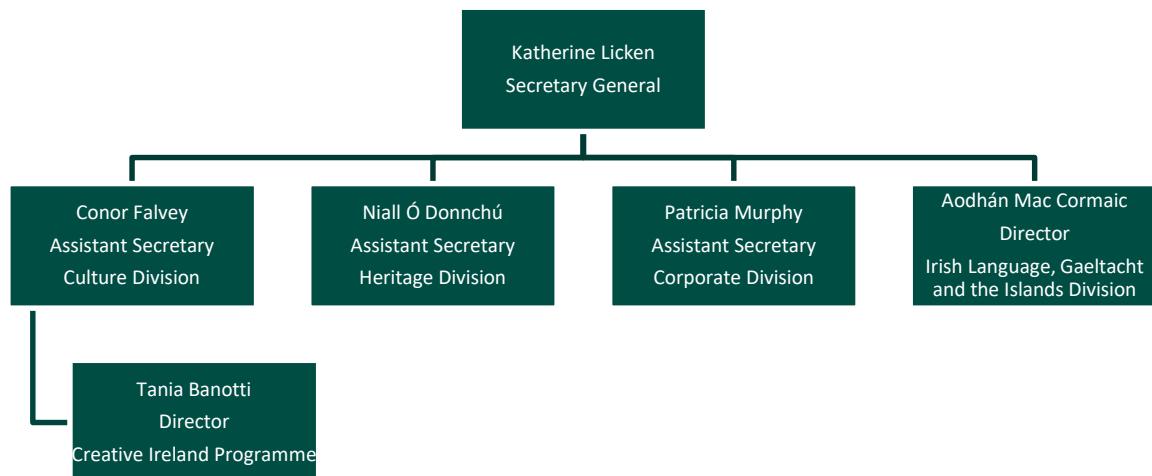
This mission is fulfilled through the pursuit of five High Level Goals for the Department:

- **Goal A:** To support and develop engagement with, and in, arts, culture and creativity by individuals and communities thereby enriching individual and community well-being; and to promote Ireland's arts and culture globally.
- **Goal B:** To conserve, protect, manage and present our built and natural heritage for its intrinsic value and as an inspiration to creativity and environmental appreciation as well as a support to local communities, regional economic development and sustainable employment.
- **Goal C:** To support the use of the Irish language throughout Ireland and to strengthen its use as the principal community language of the Gaeltacht.
- **Goal D:** To facilitate the sustainable development of island communities.
- **Goal E:** To promote North South co-operation, particularly in the context of An Foras Teanga and Waterways Ireland.

Organisation of the Department

The Department is organised into four Divisions - Culture, Heritage, the Irish Language, the Gaeltacht and the Islands, and Corporate. The Culture, Heritage and Corporate Divisions are each led by an Assistant Secretary and the Irish Language, the Gaeltacht and the Islands Division is led by a Director. A Director is charged with overseeing the delivery of the Creative Ireland Programme by 2022.

Organisation Chart of the Department of Culture, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht



Bodies under the aegis of the Department

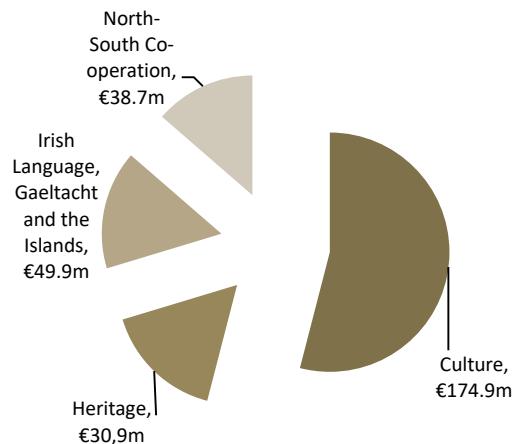
The Department is supported in its work by bodies under its aegis, including the National Cultural Institutions and relevant North-South Implementation Bodies and agencies. Effective governance is a major element of the Department's work with its agencies.

National Cultural Institutions	Agencies
National Archives	Arts Council
National Concert Hall	Heritage Council
National Gallery of Ireland	Screen Ireland
National Library of Ireland	Údarás na Gaeltachta
National Museum of Ireland	Foras na Gaeilge
Irish Museum of Modern Art	Waterways Ireland
Chester Beatty Library	
Crawford Art Gallery	

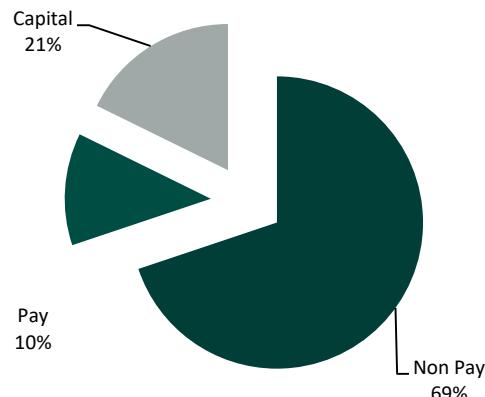
Expenditure in 2019

To support its work programme in 2019, the Department incurred €335.3m in expenditure in 2019.

Gross Voted Expenditure by Programme, 2019



Gross Voted Expenditure by Pay, Current and Capital, 2019



Current expenditure includes salaries for the Agencies and Bodies under the Aegis of the Department

Project Ireland 2040 – Capital Investment Plan

Following the launch of *Investing in our Culture, Language and Heritage (2018 – 2027)*, the Department's sectoral investment plan under Project Ireland 2040, the Department has worked to progress a broad range of capital works ranging from significant redevelopments at the National Library of Ireland and the National Archives, to a comprehensive programme of trails upgrades across our network of National Parks and Nature Reserves.

Our investments have played an important role in supporting and stimulating local economies through our support for enterprise development by Údarás na Gaeltachta, our investment in the audiovisual sector through Screen Ireland and our strategic partnership with Fáilte Ireland to enhance visitor experiences across our National Parks network.

Across our three programme areas of Culture, Language and Heritage, our capital investment plan under Project Ireland 2040, has supported individuals and communities to:

- Protect our unique built heritage through our Built Heritage Investment Scheme and Historic Structures Fund;
- Sustain our Gaeltacht and island communities through a range of Gaeltacht support schemes;
- Support the renewal of arts and culture facilities across the country under a number of cultural investment schemes, most recently the Cultural Capital Scheme which will run to 2022.

The Department has continued to build strong partnerships for delivery across its capital programme, working closely with partners in OPW, Fáilte Ireland, the Department of Rural and Community

Development, among others. The Department also supports capital investment in our inland waterways across the island by Waterways Ireland, a North-South body established under the Good Friday Agreement.

The Department undertook €70m in capital expenditure in 2019, the second year of *Investing in our Culture, Language and Heritage*.

Capital Expenditure on Investing in our Culture, Language and Heritage, 2019 (Provisional)

Programme	Programme Area	Expenditure
Culture		€ 35.04m
	<i>NCI Programme</i>	€ 6.01m
	<i>AV Strategy (Fís Éireann)</i>	€ 16.20m
	<i>Local arts infrastructure</i>	€ 5.92m
	<i>Digitisation Scheme</i>	€ 0.91m
	<i>Galway European City of Culture</i>	€ 6.00m
Gaeltacht/Language/Islands		€ 13.83m
	<i>Gaeltacht Language Planning Process</i>	€ 1.02m
	<i>Údarás na Gaeltachta</i>	€ 9.70m
	<i>Irish Language Networks</i>	€ 0.10m
	<i>Islands and island marine infrastructure</i>	€ 3.00m
Heritage		€ 21.4m
	<i>National Parks and Nature Reserves</i>	€ 3.00m
	<i>Caring for Historic Environment</i>	€ 7.76m
	<i>Built Heritage</i>	€ 4.74m
	<i>National Monuments</i>	€ 0.31m
	<i>Natural Heritage and Biodiversity</i>	€ 5.59m
Administration		€0.54m
TOTAL		€70.81m

Highlights in 2019

Arts, Culture & Commemorations

A number of new initiatives were rolled out under the **Creative Ireland Programme** – now in its third year – many of which were significant examples of cross-Departmental and inter-agency cooperation and development:

Creative Schools is an initiative that supports every school in embracing arts and creativity for children and young people. The inaugural *Creative Schools Week* took place during the week of 4th to 8th November 2019 in schools and venues across the country. This event provided an opportunity for schools to share, showcase and celebrate their creativity.

A range of initiatives under the Creative Youth Plan commenced in 2019:

- *Fighting Words* – enabling Fighting Words to reach many more children and young people, while a new Irish language workshop in Gaeltacht areas was also established;
- *Youth Theatre Ireland* – a new nationwide expansion to establish new partnerships with local groups and youth service providers;
- *Sing Ireland* – a new project, “*YouthSing Ireland*”, was commenced to enhance opportunities for engaging young people in singing, supporting teachers with an enhanced CPD and the development of new resource material in Irish or of Irish origin.

The **National Creativity Fund** was established to identify and support pilot projects that are innovative and significantly add value to the Creative Ireland Programme.

Under the National Creativity Fund, the following initiatives were established:

- Royal Irish Academy of Music established *Le Chéile* – a new Open Youth Orchestra of Ireland made up exclusively of musicians with disabilities including Down Syndrome, autism and cerebral palsy;
- *The Lullaby Project* - A nine month musical programme in two Galway pre-school settings to use music to support emotional wellbeing and build confidence in very young children, their parents and those working in pre-school settings;
- The *Creative Health Hub* - supporting children and young people to let their creativity free, and show the difference creative engagement can make to the mental health and wellbeing of children facing the social and emotional challenges of long-term illness.

The Creative Ireland Programme commissioned a report (**Engaging the Public on Climate Change through the Cultural and Creative Sectors**) which suggests ways in which the cultural and creative sector can engage the public on climate change and climate action, and can help inform the National Dialogue on Climate Action (NDCA).

Under the Creative Ireland Programme, the Arts Council launched a new exciting Creative Places pilot programme. A three-year pilot programme developed for communities around the country that have not previously had the opportunity to benefit from sustained public arts investment.

During 2019, **Culture Ireland** supported 453 artistic projects across all artforms in 55

countries around the world. These events reached 6m audience members.

Under the Global Ireland Initiative, five Cultural Ambassadors - Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara, Martin Hayes, Paul Muldoon and Ruth Negga - were appointed at the beginning of 2019 to work with Culture Ireland to increase the impact of Irish arts globally.

Ireland's presentation at the Venice Art Biennale Exhibition was created by artist Eva Rothschild entitled "The Shrinking Universe" and curated by Mary Cremin.

The **Cultural Digitisation Scheme** funded a number of different projects in 2019 including Band Aid, personal papers of the signatories of the Treaty prior to the centenary of the foundation of the State, and Church of Ireland genealogical records.

The Irish Museum of Modern Arts (IMMA) held a major retrospective of the acclaimed British artist and filmmaker Derek Jarman. This is the first time that the diverse strands of his talent were brought together in over 20 years.

Under the **National Cultural Institutions Investment Programme** (€460m), June 2019 saw the opening of a new book repository, comprising over 4,700 linear metres of storage, at the National Library of Ireland.

In July, the Minister launched Ireland's **National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage** (ICH), with over 30 inscribed ICH practices. In December, Ireland achieved the inscription of the practice of Irish Harping on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

In September, Minister Madigan launched the cultural programme for **Galway 2020** – European Capital of Culture. In October, Galway 2020 was recommended for the prestigious EU Melina Mercouri Prize which involves funding of €1.5m by the European Commission.

The **Decade of Centenaries** programme supported **Dáil100**, the centenary commemoration by the Houses of the Oireachtas of the first sitting of the Dáil in January 1919.

The 'pop-up' museum, which celebrates **100 Years of Women in Politics and Public Life, 1918 - 2018** was opened by the Minister on 14 December 2018 in Dublin Castle's Coach House and in 2019 the 'pop-up' travelled to Limerick City, Letterkenny and Roscommon before returning to the Department head office in 23 Kildare Street, Dublin

The Department also supported community-led commemorations of the Soloheadbeg Ambush of 21 January, 1919 and Seán Hogan's rescue at Knocklong Railway Station on 13 May, 1919.

The **National Famine Commemoration**, presided over by Taoiseach Leo Varadkar, was held in Sligo on the 19th of May. The community included performances by local musicians from Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann Sligeach and the sixty voice Sligo Famine Choir formed specially for the Commemoration. At this Commemoration, the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Josepha Madigan, T.D., launched a booklet produced by the County Sligo Famine Commemoration Committee to mark the 150th Anniversary of the Famine.

Heritage

In 2019, nearly €3m was invested in measures to conserve and enhance the visitor experience at our **National Parks and Nature Reserves**.

In February 2019, the Department hosted the first National Biodiversity Conference, which produced '*Seeds for Nature*', a suite of commitments to conserve biodiversity from the public and private sector. During the year the Department invested €5.6 m to promote the conservation of biodiversity, support the National Biodiversity Action Plan, 2017-2021, and to protect and restore our peatlands.

Waterways Ireland invested nearly €5.1m in maintaining our inland waterways and the ongoing works to restore the Ulster Canal

The **National Monuments Service** increased public engagement with the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) with the release of new editions of satellite imagery, resulting in an almost doubling of annual figures of new SMR entries from 805 reported in 2018 to 1,503 reported in 2019.

Both the National Monuments Service and the Heritage Council undertook programmes to increase engagement with Irelands Heritage by primary school children with the Heritage in schools programme and also a schools competition was held to design an Emoji for Heritage (linking in with the development of Heritage 2030).

In March 2019, the Minister announced grant aid of €4.3m to 478 heritage projects across every county in the country under the **Historic Structures Fund and Built Heritage Investment Scheme**.

In terms of protecting our architectural heritage, the Department continued its

financial support for projects under a range of **Built Heritage Funding Schemes**:

- 316 projects across all local authority areas funded through the Built Heritage Investment Scheme;
- Six historic towns were awarded €1m in capital funding under the Heritage Council's Historic Town Initiative 2019 – Nenagh, Co. Tipperary; Boyle, Co. Roscommon; Letterkenny, Co. Donegal; Navan, Co. Meath; Kilrush, Co. Clare; and Ballina, Co. Mayo; and,
- In the first year of the Historic Structures Fund 2019, grants of €1.77m were paid to fund 67 projects

During August, **Heritage Week** (Pasttimes – Past Times) saw more than 2,000 events attended by over 423,000 people.

Efforts accelerated in 2019 to revitalise Irelands unique **raised bog habitat** with restoration measures completed on 7 raised bog SACs by the Department and through the EU LIFE 'Living Bog' project. Restoration on the remainder of the project sites are due to be completed in 2020. Funding of €131,000 was provided by the Department in 2019 to 13 community-led projects under the **Peatlands Community Engagement Scheme**, to promote and conserve our peatlands landscape.

In 2019, the Department sucessfully applied for substantial funding from the EU LIFE programme for two projects – LIFE "Wild Atlantic Nature" and "CREXLIFE". The LIFE "Wild Atlantic Nature" project will deliver on the Prioritised Action Framework for the birds and Habitats Directives nationally. The "CrexLIFE" project seeks to improve Corncrake conservation status in Ireland.

The "**ObSERVE**" project, a collaboration between this Department and the Department

of Communications, Climate Action & Environment (and drawing in leading experts on marine species), won a Civil Service Excellence and Innovation Award in 2019 in the category Research, Analytics and Insight. The

reports from this project provided a significant amount of new information on whales, dolphins and seabirds in the seas around Ireland.

Irish Language, Gaeltacht & the Islands

In 2019, the Department provided €9.7m to support the work of **Údarás na Gaeltachta** in investing in job creation and enterprise development initiatives in Gaeltacht regions, directly contributing to the sustainable development of the Gaeltacht.

In December 2019, the Department announced the purchase of **Aerfort Chonamara**. State ownership of this strategic asset will provide greater certainty as to the future of the air services to the Aran Islands to enhance the sustainability of those communities as well as sustaining this important transport link for visitors and islanders alike.

Planning for the development of **Inis Oírr, Inis Meáin and Machaire Rabhartaigh piers** and for ferry services for Toraigh, County Donegal, has been progressed in line with commitments in *Investing in our Culture, Language and Heritage, 2018-2027*, and **9 island transport contracts** renewed in 2019. In 2019, the Department subsidised 26 separate routes for Air, Ferry and Cargo services to the islands of the state.

In 2019, over €1.4m was advanced to support community groups in the Gaeltacht as part of the **Gaeltacht Language Planning Process** and to support Irish-Language Networks established outside the Gaeltacht. Part of this latter initiative saw significant progress in planning for a flagship language and culture hub in Dublin City in partnership with Dublin City Council, Conradh na Gaeilge, Fáilte Ireland and Foras na Gaeilge.

In relation to the **Irish colleges sector**, subventions provided by the Department facilitated over 26,000 students in attending 42 Gaeltacht Irish summer colleges, with accommodation provided by 712 families in all seven Gaeltacht regions.

Projects were supported in the **digital humanities and terminology sectors**. Dúchas.ie, logainm.ie, abair.ie and Clár TechSpace (a new Irish language radio app bringing together all Irish language radio stations), a Digital Plan for the Irish language and *Edcite as Gaeilge* (a new digital content resource for schools) are just some of the projects commenced or progressed in 2019.



Goal A – Arts, Culture, Film and Music

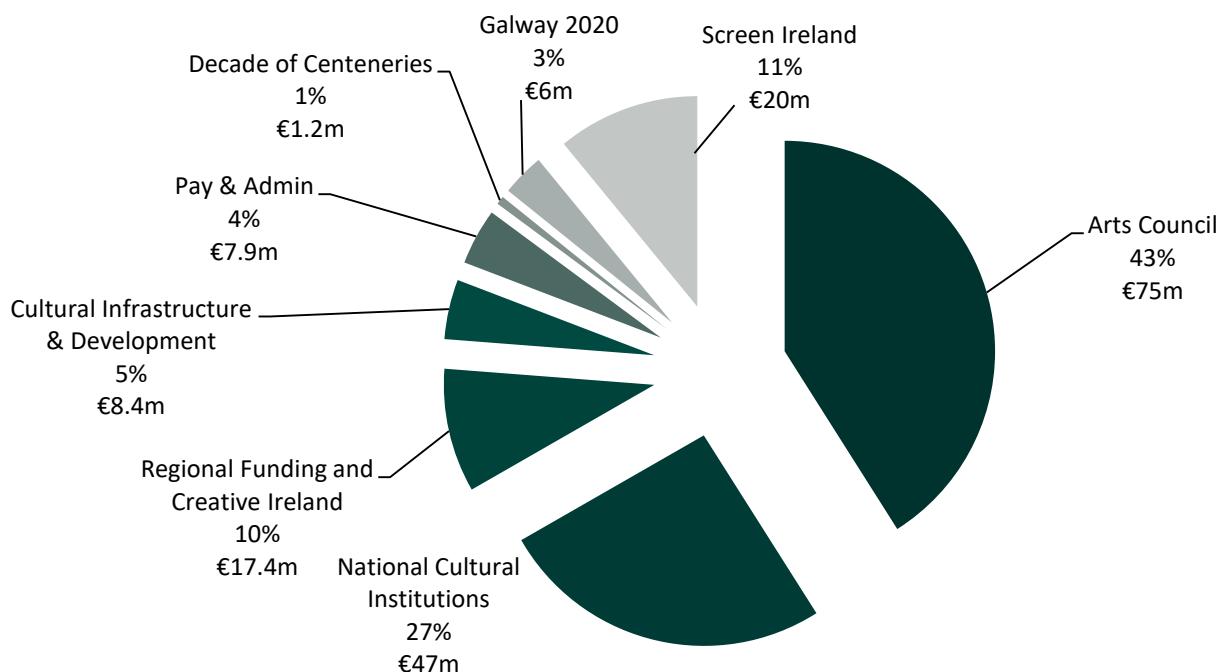
To support and develop engagement with, and in, arts, culture and creativity by individuals and communities thereby enriching individual and community well-being; and to promote Ireland's arts and culture globally.

This goal is broadly the responsibility of the Culture Division and the bodies under Department's aegis - the Arts Council, the National Cultural Institutions and Screen Ireland – who pursue it through eight High Level Strategies.

In 2019, some €174.9m in expenditure was undertaken to support this goal, supporting cultural participation in all of the arts and stimulating creativity across the state and promoting Irish culture and the arts abroad (including pay and administration for those working in the National Cultural Institutions and Arts Council). The five main expenditure areas for the programme were:

- Support for the Arts Council which accounted for €75m of expenditure in 2019;
- Support for the National Cultural Institutions which accounted for €47m in 2019;
- Funding for Screen Ireland of €20m
- Funding of €17.4m for Regional Museums, Galleries, Cultural Centres and projects, including for the Creative Ireland Programme;
- Funding of €8.4m for Cultural Infrastructure and Development, including the planning and early stage implementation of the Department's 10-year Capital *Plan Investing in our Culture, Language & Heritage 2018-2027*;
- Funding of €1.18m for the Decade of Centenaries programme; and
- Funding of €6m for the European City of Culture - Galway 2020.

Expenditure on Goal A by main expenditure area, 2019



Strategy 1: Implementing Culture 2025 and the Creative Ireland Programme

The implementation of 'Culture 2025' policy and the Creative Ireland Programme 2017-2022 and ongoing commemorations programmes in partnership with national and local stakeholders

Creative Ireland

Throughout 2019, the Creative Ireland Programme continued working with central and local government, State Agencies, sectoral bodies, NGOs and a wide variety of individuals and partners to progress the Programme's objectives across all five Pillars, as well as developing new initiatives which further the broader aims of the Programme.

A number of initiatives to further implement the actions contained in the **Creative Youth Plan** (Pillar 1, Enabling the Creative Potential of Children and Young People) were progressed during 2019.

Creative Schools is a flagship initiative of the Creative Ireland Programme and is led by the Arts Council with funding support from the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, and the Department of Education and Skills. The long-term aim is for every school to be supported to fully embrace the arts and creativity, ensuring a positive experience and strong outcomes for children and young people. Following its successful launch in September 2018, the Creative Youth partners committed to a doubling of participants in the initiative in 2019. Following a new round of applications in February 2019, 300 schools across the country are now participating in the initiative which aims to put the arts and creativity at the heart of children and young people's lives. The inaugural *Creative Schools Week* – an opportunity for schools to share, showcase and celebrate their creativity – took place during the week of 4th to 8th November 2019 in schools and venues across the country.



As well as continuing to support initiatives such as *Creative Clusters*, *Continuing Professional Development* (CPD) for Teachers and the expansion of *Music Generation*, the Creative Ireland Programme also commenced support for a range of other initiatives under the Creative Youth Plan in 2019:

- *Fighting Words* – the Programme is facilitating the further expansion of this free service, enabling Fighting Words to reach many more children and young people, while a new Irish language workshop in Gaeltacht areas was also established;
- *Youth Theatre Ireland* – a new nationwide expansion was commenced which will establish new partnerships with local groups and youth service providers, as well as the design of a structure for the development, training and start-up of youth theatre groups; and
- *Sing Ireland* – a new project, “*YouthSing Ireland*”, was commenced to enhance opportunities for engaging young people in singing, while also supporting teachers with an enhanced CPD and the development of new resource material in Irish or of Irish origin.

The **National Creativity Fund** was established to identify and support pilot projects that are genuinely innovative and significantly add value to the Creative Ireland Programme, and to help inform policy and/or cross-sectoral development in the area of culture, creativity and wellbeing. Throughout 2019, the Creative Ireland Programme continued to work with and support all project teams to enable successful outcomes on individual project objectives and to assess the potential long-term public policy impacts, such as:

- *Le Chéile* – the Royal Irish Academy of Music’s new Open Youth Orchestra of Ireland. This unique ensemble is the first of its kind in the country and is made up exclusively of musicians with disabilities including Down Syndrome, autism and cerebral palsy;
- *The Lullaby Project* – the Galway Childcare Committee and Groundswell Arts undertook a nine month musical programme in two Galway pre-school settings to use music to support emotional wellbeing and build confidence in very young children, their parents and those working in pre-school settings; and
- *Creative Health Hub* – supporting children and young people to let their creativity free, and show the difference creative engagement can make to the mental health and wellbeing of children facing the social and emotional challenges of long-term illness.

The Government’s “Climate Action Plan to Tackle Climate Breakdown” aims to move Ireland towards the goal of net zero carbon emissions by 2050 through not only structural, economic and technical changes but also through behavioural and social transformation (i.e. climate change is also a major cultural challenge). In response to this, the Creative Ireland Programme commissioned a report (**Engaging the Public on Climate Change through the Cultural and Creative Sectors**) which suggests ways in which the cultural and creative sector can engage the public on climate change and climate action, and the different approaches that can be used as part of the broader climate narrative, and that can help inform the National Dialogue on Climate Action (NDCA). The report examines how to foster relationships between relevant Local Authority officials in the culture and creativity teams and Climate Action Regional Offices (CAROs), how to ignite interest and develop understanding of the

potential offered by the cultural and creative sector to engage citizens on climate, and identifies possible actions that could be undertaken.

The Department (through the Creative Ireland Programme) partnered with the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection on a review of a pilot *scheme for self-employed artists* (visual and writers) who receive Jobseekers Allowance. As a result, in July 2019 an extension of the scheme on a permanent basis to self-employed artists, including those working in the performing arts, film and architecture was announced. This means that since September 2019, self-employed artists in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance for the first year they are out of work are able to focus on their artistic efforts, rather than having to participate in the normal labour market activation activities.

Building on the success of the *Fulbright Creative Ireland Museum Fellowships*, the Creative Ireland Programme signed an additional Agreement with the Fulbright Commission during 2019 to fund an additional fellowship that encompasses experienced professionals operating in the cultural/cultural heritage and creative sectors.

In accordance with the aims of Pillar 4 of the Programme (Ireland as a Centre of Excellence in Media Production), *Future Jobs Ireland 2019* identified the development of a **Roadmap for the Creative Industries** as a key deliverable to diversify our enterprise base ensuring the Irish economy is more resilient and adaptable. Following significant consultation with academics, small businesses, industry representatives, as well as with EU officials (including three large workshops and a survey of design businesses), the Creative Ireland Programme worked throughout 2019 to draft this Roadmap in conjunction with a number of different Government Departments and Agencies.

Arts Council

The Arts Council funding was increased by up by 10% to €75m, including over €6m in current funding, more than double the increase of 2018. The Arts Council's increase in current funding was primarily directed towards ongoing relationships with professional arts organisations and professional practising artists through funding programmes, Strategic Funding and Arts Grant Funding. Under the Creative Ireland Programme, the Arts Council launched Creative Places a new three-year pilot programme, whereby the Arts Council invests directly in a place and its people, working with key local partners to uncover each location's key assets, resources and ambitions. In addition the Council doubled the number of schools that will benefit from the Creative Schools programme.

Strategy 2: Future proofing our national collections

Future proofing our national collections to ensure they are available to future generations

Investing in our Culture, Language and Heritage, 2018-2027

Many of our National Cultural Institutions are housed in historic buildings and while this adds to the cultural experience for citizens and visitors, significant investment is needed to bring them up to

modern international standards. This is now critical for display and performance but also for fundamental health and safety and universal access reasons.

This investment plan envisages a significant increase in investment in the National Cultural Institutions to revamp and modernise their facilities both in terms of visitor experience and storage of our national collections – one of the largest single commitments to investment in our cultural institutions in the history of the State.

Over the period 2018 to 2027, the Government intends to invest €460m in a significant number of capital projects in our National Cultural Institutions. Indicative Government investment levels for key projects are as follows:

National Library of Ireland	€23m
National Archives	€22m
National Museum of Ireland	€85m
National Concert Hall	€78m
Crawford Art Gallery	€22m
National Gallery of Ireland	€54m
Abbey Theatre	€80m
Irish Museum of Modern Art	€36m
Chester Beatty Library	€20m

National Gallery of Ireland

Preparations for Phase 4a, which comprises remedial health and safety work at the Gallery offices on 88-90 Merrion Square, commenced in 2019 with €495,000 secured for 2020 to facilitate a move into temporary alternate accommodation provided by the OPW. Phase 4a is projected to be finished by end 2022.

National Museum of Ireland

Following on from the publication of the Museum's Master Vision Statement for the period 2018 to 2032, the National Museum has commenced work on the development project at the National History Museum.

The Museum has been working with the Department to ensure that the development project progresses through the requirements of the Public Spending Code. The strategic assessment report has been completed and the Museum has commenced work on the preparation of the preliminary business case.

Crawford Art Gallery

The Crawford Art Gallery is the only National Cultural Institution located in its entirety outside Dublin.

The Crawford has been working with the Department to ensure that the development project progresses through the requirements of the Public Spending Code. The strategic assessment report has been completed and the Crawford commenced work on the preparation of the preliminary business case.

Digitisation Projects

In October 2017, the Department announced €2.3m for a new cultural Digitisation Scheme which is currently assisting Cultural Institutions, together with a number of other cultural heritage bodies, to build on their digitisation offering and digitise their rich and varied collections for the benefit of the public. Projects funded in 2019 include Band Aid , personal papers of the signatories of the Treaty prior to the centenary of the foundation of the State, and Church of Ireland genealogical records. Digitisation provides a very important channel to connect with our Diaspora – which is estimated to be up to 70m people worldwide – and in turn encourages cultural tourism.

National Library of Ireland

Under *Investing in our Culture, Language and Heritage 2018-2027*, an amount of €23m in capital funding is allocated to the redevelopment of the National Library of Ireland (NLI). The NLI commenced enabling works in the first part of the redevelopment in summer 2018 with an estimated completed date of 2022. This first project is entitled "Re-Imagining the National Library" and involves:

- Upgrading the East Wing of the NLI premises at Kildare Street (known as the NCAD Building) to become a permanent storage and preservation facility. This phase was completed in June 2019; and
- the upgrading of the West Wing - an 1890s building facing onto Kildare Street - and conversion into public exhibition spaces.

National Archives

The National Archives redevelopment project will see the provision of a secure environmentally controlled Archival Repository in accordance with internationally accepted archival storage standards. The existing storage space will be converted from a large single-story warehouse to a two-storey Archival Repository that will increase the National Archives storage capacity by two-thirds with enabling works having commenced in 2018. It is anticipated that the main construction contract for this project will be awarded in the second half of 2020 .

Strategy 3: Audio-visual sectors

Expanding the opportunities for Ireland's audio-visual sectors

In June 2018 the Minister launched the Audiovisual Action Plan (AV plan), under the Creative Ireland Programme. The AV plan sets out the Government's high-level, strategic priorities over a ten year period to develop a vibrant media production and audiovisual sector, bringing new economic opportunities across Ireland, through increased Government support. 2019 was the the first full year of implementation of the AV plan and there have been a number of key achievements since its launch.

The European Commission gave approval to the extenstion of the film tax relief , section 481 until 2024. In addition, the Regional Film Development Uplift credit was introduced which provides an

additional tax credit over the four years from 2019 to 2022 to incentivise film production in areas outside of traditional production hubs.

2019 also saw increased funding for Screen Ireland to support increased investment in feature films and TV drama. In 2019 Screen Ireland opened the TV Drama Production funding scheme which has provided opportunities for series such as *Darklands*, the series *Normal People*, written by Irish author Sally Rooney and directed by Oscar-nominated Irish director Lenny Abrahamson and the comedy/drama *The South Westerlies*.

Training and skills development has been a key focus under the AV plan. Screen Skills Ireland introduced new certified programmes including ‘Creative Leadership’ and ‘Advanced Producers’ (both in partnership with Technological University (TU) Dublin). Screen Skills Ireland now also play a key role in developing skills development plans in conjunction with producer companies as part of applications for section 481 film tax relief.

In 2019, Ireland signed the revised Council of Europe Convention on Cinematographic Co-production which will facilitate partnerships on co-productions with other European countries.

Other key achievements under the plan include the workshops on commercialisation of animation intellectual property and improved marketing of Ireland’s audiovisual sector. In September 2019, the Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar TD travelled to Los Angeles and opened the new Consulate General of Ireland as part of the Government’s aim to expand its global footprint as part of the *Global Ireland 2025* initiative. The *Global Ireland 2025* plan, under the initiative *Bringing our Culture and Heritage to the Wider World* also committed to boosting Screen Ireland’s presence in Los Angeles and, during the Taoiseach’s trade visit to LA, it was announced that Screen Ireland will establish a new office in Los Angeles in 2020 to develop relationships with the world’s leading studios and production companies.

Strategy 4: Supporting a high quality cultural offering

Supporting our agencies and National Cultural Institutions in providing a high quality cultural offering to the public

National Gallery of Ireland

The National Gallery of Ireland programme for 2019 included an exhibition on the works of Canaletto comprising approximately 40 paintings and 60 works on paper. Paintings, drawings and prints by Canaletto were shown alongside groups of paintings and drawings by his contemporaries, including Sebastiano and Marco Ricci, Francesco Zuccarelli, Antonio Visentini and Giovanni Battista Piazzetta. There was also a significant exhibition entitled *Sorolla: Spanish Master of Light* which was organised in close collaboration with the Museo Sorolla in Madrid, and with assistance from Blanca Pons-Sorolla, great-granddaughter of the artist and expert on his work. The Gallery exceeded 760,000 visitors in 2019.

Irish Museum of Modern Arts

IMMA again provided a wide-ranging programme in 2019 which combined international artists and Irish artists. The exhibitions ranged from Colombian artist Doris Salcedo to a focus on Freud and Yeats. This exhibition brought these two artists together for the first time in 70 years. In September, IMMA curated a large scale group exhibition exploring the evolving role of desire in art and life and its relationship to structures of power. A particular highlight for 2019 was a major retrospective of the acclaimed British artist and filmmaker Derek Jarman. This is the first time that the diverse strands of his practice were brought together in over 20 years.

National Concert Hall

The NCH continued to deliver a varied musical programme in 2019. This ranged from the International Concert Series to Perspectives which focused on contemporary music. The NCH delivered its learning and participation programme which offered a number of different ways of experiencing and learning about music.

Chester Beatty Library

The Chester Beatty Library has a significant collection which opens a window on the artistic treasures of the great cultures and religions of the world. In early 2019, the Library continued its exhibition "Gifts of a Lifetime" which presented a choice selection of masterpieces from the Beatty collection. The Library also presented an exhibition focusing on its internationally important yet little known collection of Buddhist manuscripts from Thailand.

Crawford Art Gallery

There was another substantial increase in visitors to the Crawford in 2019. Numbers rose to 265,438. This reflected a varied and engaging programme which was delivered by the Crawford. It included the exhibition "Seen not Heard" which included a selection of work ranging from 18th-century to present, examining the representations of children from the historical to contemporary from Irish art collections and Irish artists.

National Museum of Ireland

Visitor numbers to the NMI were again over the 1m mark in 2019. This reflects an engaging programme of exhibitions which included, amongst other things, a focus on the impact of rural electrification and a Cartier Bresson exhibition. The NMI continued to deliver a varied learning and participation programme.

Cultural and Heritage Centre

The Cultural and Heritage Centre at the Bank of Ireland, College Green, Dublin 2 was developed as a partnership between the Department and Bank of Ireland and opened in July 2018. The Centre's

current exhibition is '*Seamus Heaney: Listen Now Again*', which draws on the **National Library of Ireland's** extensive archive of Heaney manuscripts.

In its first year of operation (July 2018 – July 2019), the exhibition welcomed over 108,000 visitors. In November 2019, the Centre welcomed its 150,000th visitor. These figures represent a diverse demographic that includes tourists from home and abroad, academic scholars, adult learners and primary and secondary school children.

Strategy 5: Enhancing the role of local authorities

Enhancing the role of local authorities in delivering arts and cultural and commemorative services

Under Pillar 2 (Enabling Creativity in Every Community), the Creative Ireland Programme engages local communities with creativity to support place-making, social cohesion (encompassing social inclusion), and the local creative economy. This is primarily delivered through Local Authorities whose individual 5-year Culture and Creativity Plans highlight the critical role Local Authorities play as providers and enablers of cultural and creative experiences in communities across Ireland, with all of the vitally important social and economic consequences that follow.

During 2019, the Department provided funding of €2.3m to Local Authorities to continue support for the implementation of their 5-year **Culture and Creativity Plans**. This was augmented by €1m from the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government. Collectively, this funding supported over 730 community-led, cross-sectoral projects in 2019 spanning heritage, the Irish language, arts, architecture, design, gastronomy, and technology, among many others, right across the country.

The Creative Ireland Programme was designed to promote public engagement in creative activity which would result in significant positive implications for individual and societal wellbeing and achievement. Recognising that creativity has an important role to play by enhancing the psychological and emotional wellbeing of the individual in their everyday life, the Creative Ireland Programme has collaborated with Local Authorities and individual practitioners and organisations to deliver a range of initiatives. These projects exemplify the excellent work being done with creative communities around Ireland, thus enabling the creative potential of our citizens, young and old, to effect real and transformative change in our towns and communities:

- Clare County Council's *Cultural Companion* initiative which facilitates a network of older people to continue to enjoy arts and cultural activities.
- Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council's *Cuairt agus Cultúr* which engages six residential care homes and six creative practitioners to programme events for the residents living there.
- Cork County Council's *A Sound Initiative* which allows people to test their skills on a borrowed musical instrument before investing a significant amount of money on an instrument of their own.

Cruinniú na nÓg, Ireland's national day of creativity for children and young people under 18, aims to celebrate and encourage children and young people's participation in culture and creative activities

such as art, music, coding and theatre workshops, performances, exhibitions, readings, film screenings and much more. Following the first ever Cruinníú on 23 June 2018, the second outing on 15 June 2019 proved to be even more successful with over 750 free creative events taking place (an increase of 56% on 2018). Total funding of over €700,000 was provided by the Department to Local Authorities to develop and deliver a bespoke programme of events for the children and young people living in their area. To mark the second year of the initiative, three young Cruinníú na nÓg ambassadors were appointed to advocate and encourage young people to get involved in something creative on the day and try one of the free local workshops or special events. Given the national reach of Cruinníú na nÓg, the Creative Ireland Programme enjoyed invaluable support from RTÉ who partnered to design and roll out a national TV and radio campaign as well as a continuing partnership with the Irish Independent newspapers.

Strategy 6: Arts and Cultural Infrastructure

Securing and upgrading a viable network of arts and cultural infrastructure

Abbey Theatre

The current Abbey Theatre building is over 50 years old and is widely recognised as being deficient in the facilities it provides for artists, audiences and staff and in terms of its energy efficiency. The new theatre building is intended to honour the history and legacy, whilst matching the national theatres of other European Capital Cities. The proposed new theatre will also contribute to revitalising a key area in Dublin 1, at the juncture of the two major Luas lines.

The Abbey Theatre is continuing to work towards a final business case that outlines the best option for a major redevelopment of the theatre. The project is still at an early stage but progress is ongoing.

New Cultural Capital Scheme 2019 – 2022

In Q4 2019 the Minister announced a new €4.7m capital investment scheme for arts and culture centres across the country. Applications were invited for the Cultural Capital Scheme which will run from 2019-2022. The Scheme will focus on enhancing the existing stock of arts and culture centres that operate as not-for-profit organisations throughout the country and that have a clearly defined arts and culture focus.

A particular focus of this scheme will be its emphasis on the reduction of carbon footprints to dovetail with the Government's action on climate change. Projects providing additional capacity for artists and artistic production particularly in arts centres will also be favoured. The Scheme builds on the success of the Arts and Culture Capital Scheme 2016-2018 which saw grants allocated to 134 organisations in 26 counties to refurbish and enhance their facilities. This funding is provided from a €40m capital investment allocation for local arts and culture infrastructure contained in *Project Ireland 2040 "Investing in our Culture, Language & Heritage 2018-2027"*.

The Arts and Culture Capital Scheme 2016 - 2018 is focused on the refurbishment and enhancement of the existing stock of arts and culture facilities throughout the country. Overall, funding of €10.214m has been allocated to 134 projects under three complementary grant streams.

This has been the most significant investment in cultural infrastructure in a decade with funding provided to a range of facilities, including arts centres, theatres, galleries and museums, as well as artists' studios and creative spaces. A full list of all successful projects is available on the Department's website at the following link:

<https://www.chg.gov.ie/arts/creative-arts/grants-and-funding/previous-schemes/>

At the end of 2019 a total of 85 projects for which funding was awarded are now complete with grants fully drawn down; a further 4 are completed with just retention amounts remaining to be paid. A further 6 projects have partially drawn down their grants. Payments of €2.18m were made to 43 projects under the Scheme in 2019, bringing total expenditure to date to just under €4m..

Music Capital Scheme 2018/2019

The Music Capital Scheme is funded by the Department and managed by Music Network. It comprises two distinct awards that provide funding for the purchase of musical instruments to both non-professional performing groups (Award 1) and to individual professional performing musicians (Award 2). The Scheme is a vital music resource which is designed to provide support for the purchase of musical instruments, and respond to a broad range of capital needs within the music sector in Ireland.

In 2019 under Award 1, €163,400 for the purchase of musical instruments was awarded to 34 not-for-profit and community music groups across a wide range of musical genres including Marching/Concert/Pipe Bands, Multi-genre, Irish Traditional, Popular Contemporary, Contemporary Classical, Pop, Choral and Samba. Of these, 5 awards totaling €33,510 were made to the prioritised counties of Clare, Laois, Roscommon and Westmeath.

Under Award 2 in 2019, €82,040 was awarded to 19 highly skilled musicians performing at professional level to assist with the purchase of instruments/equipment. Musical genres covered in these allocations were Contemporary Classical, Classical, Flamenco, Electro-acoustic, Irish Traditional and Early/Baroque.

National Opera House

The National Opera House were allocated €1m funding for National Opera House in advance of officially opening the 2018 Wexford Festival Opera. This funding is subject to conditions set out in a Service Level Agreement (SLA). This funding is towards necessary updating and refurbishment works over the next 3 years to protect the State's significant investment in this building and to ensure that the National Opera House continues to operate at the highest quality levels for many years to come.

Pálás Arthouse Cinema

The Pálás Arthouse Cinema was a project funded through the ACCESS II scheme. The Pálás Arthouse Cinema in Galway was completed and opened to the public on 23 February 2018. Element Pictures as cinema operator finalised the construction of the cinema and the cinema was brought into public use in early 2018 . The cinema has had over 75,000 visitors in its first year of operations, which exceeds the predicted visitor numbers in the original application of 64,107 It is part of a wider Departmental investment in the City in advance of Galway 2020 European Capital of Culture.

The Department's post-project review of the Pálás Cinema project was published in October 2019 alongside the Budget as part of the 2019 DPER Spending Review. This report can be viewed on the department's website at the following link .

<https://www.chg.gov.ie/app/uploads/2019/10/post-project-review-of-the-palas-cinema.pdf>

Strategy 7: Supporting Irish artists globally

Supporting the international presentation of Irish artists globally, including the generation of new opportunities, as part of the Government's international promotion strategy

Global Ireland

The Global Ireland initiative, which plans to double Ireland's global impact by 2025, includes the international promotion of culture as a key Government focus. At the beginning of 2019 five Cultural Ambassadors, Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara, Martin Hayes, Paul Muldoon and Ruth Negga were appointed to work with Culture Ireland to increase the impact of Irish arts globally. A Culture Ireland-Global Ireland Conference held in Dublin Castle in January was attended by over 250 delegates. The conference's aim was engagement with key stakeholders on how Ireland can strategically strengthen and advance its renowned distinctive global reputation for creativity.

Culture Ireland Supports

During 2019, Culture Ireland supported 453 artistic projects across all artforms in 55 countries around the world. These events reached 6m audience members. A total of 219 presenters and programmers from 28 countries were supported to visit Ireland and experience Irish arts performing at home in order to generate further global interest in Irish arts and touring contracts for Irish artists. In addition to secure future touring opportunities, Culture Ireland supported Irish artists/companies across different artforms to present at 21 global showcase events reaching key industry contacts who programme work internationally.

Britain

Imagining Ireland at the Barbican concluded the Culture Ireland GB18 programme with a full to capacity concert with Irish and British artists. A strong programme of Irish arts continued to be supported in

Britain, including at the London Irish Centre, Camden for which Government announced financial support for the planned redevelopment.

Venice Biennale

Ireland's presentation at the Venice Art Biennale Exhibition was created by artist Eva Rothschild entitled "the Shrinking Universe" and curated by Mary Cremin. The exhibition was very well received and a national presentation is taking place in 2020.

Ireland's representation at the 2018 Venice Architecture Biennale, FreeMarket", which aimed to highlight Ireland's market towns and reclaim these places of interaction and community, toured to some market towns throughout Ireland during 2019.



North America Initiative

In January 2019, the second meeting of Irish Cultural Centres and Irish Centres programming Irish artists in North America with over 50 representatives and attended by Minister Madigan was held by Culture Ireland in partnership with the Consulate General in New York. This network of Irish cultural centres is working to achieve greater coordination of touring artists from Ireland and greater reach of Irish arts in North America.

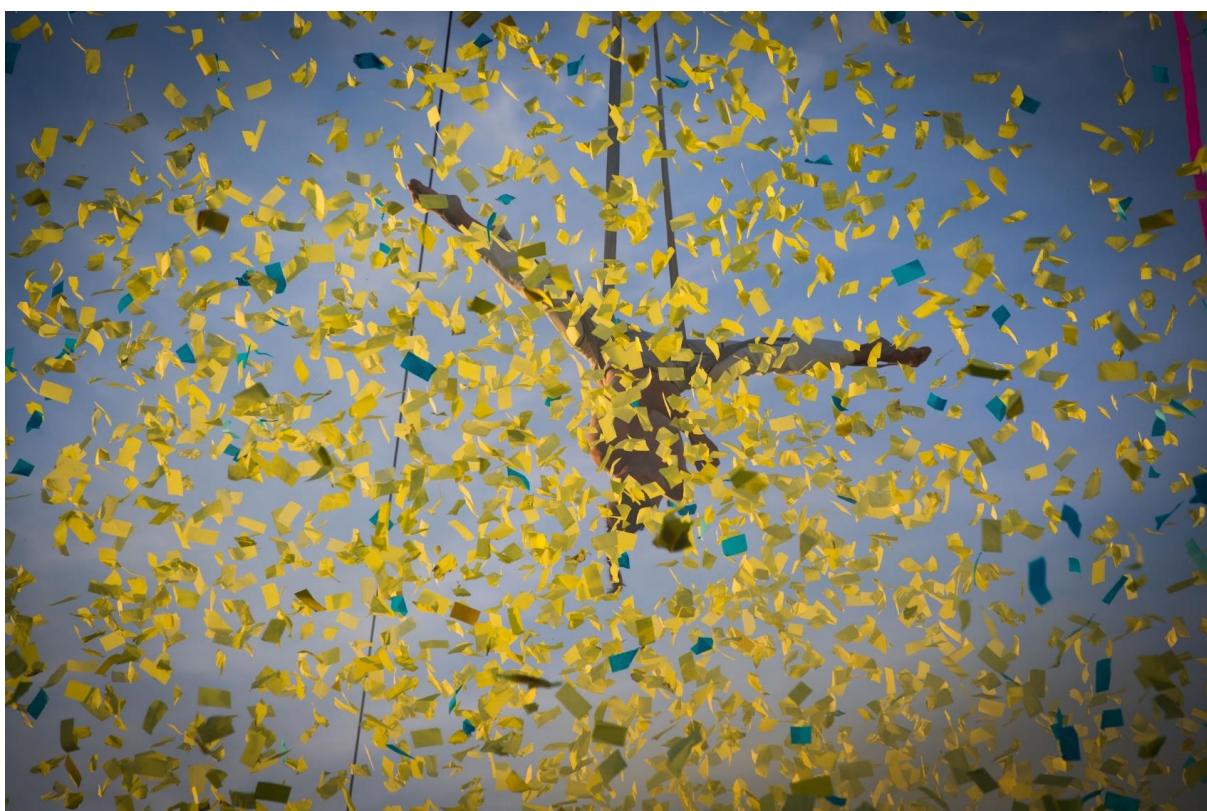
UNESCO

In July, the Minister launched Ireland's National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), with over 30 inscribed ICH practices. The National Inventory recognises and safeguards Ireland's ICH on a State level. Applications for inscription on Ireland's National Inventory of ICH continue to be received. Further details can be found at <https://nationalinventoryich.chg.gov.ie/about/>.

In December, Ireland achieved the inscription of the practice of Irish Harping on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity which raises awareness on a global level of this element of Irish culture as well as ensuring it is safeguarding for future generations.

Galway 2020 European Capital of Culture

In September, Minister Madigan launched the cultural programme for Galway 2020 – European Capital of Culture. Throughout 2020, Galway will host a programme, comprised of approximately 1,900 events and activities that reflect the richness and diversity of culture in Europe. In October, Galway 2020 was recommended for the prestigious EU Melina Mercouri Prize which involves funding of €1.5m by the European Commission.



Strategy 8: Delivering the Government commemoration programme

Developing and delivering the Government commemoration programme

The Government continued to mark the centenary of significant events of 1919 under the Decade of Centenaries programme based on the inclusive, respectful, open and consultative approach that has become the hallmark of the programme since it commenced in 2012.

The Expert Advisory Group (EAG) on Centenary Commemorations advised and supported the Government in its plans and on specific historical themes and events to be marked by the State. The Advisory Group's *Decade of Centenaries Second Phase Guidance 2018 – 2023* was published on 8th January 2019, following a public consultation process. The EAG met on six occasions in 2019.

The development and delivery of the State programme was also informed by consultation with the All-Party Consultation Group on Commemorations Chaired by Minister Madigan. The Group met on three occasions in 2019.

2019 Decade of Centenaries Commemoration Programme

Current funding of €1.1m was provided to support commemorative initiatives and events in 2019, as part of the Decade of Centenaries Programme.

The State Commemorative Programme for the period 2019-2023 is comprised of four thematic strands:

- A *State Ceremonial Strand* which will comprise a limited number of symbolic acts of national commemoration focusing on themes of remembrance and reconciliation and on the commemoration of all those who lost their lives during this period.
- An *Historical Exploration Strand* which will comprise a diverse range of activities designed to encourage authentic historical enquiry about this period and promote the use of primary archival sources. Initiatives will be developed in collaboration with State partners, National Cultural Institutions, institutions of learning and other stakeholders.
- A *Community Strand*, which will involve a collaborative approach – similar to that adopted for the 1916 centenary commemorations - between the State, local authority network and community organisations, including in Northern Ireland where appropriate.
- The *Creative Imagination Strand* which will continue to encourage artistic and creative expression in remembrance of the significant historical events of the period from 1919 to 1923 and all of those who lost their lives.

Dáil 100

Dáil 100 the centenary commemoration by the Houses of the Oireachtas of the first sitting of the Dáil effectively began the Decade of Centenaries commemorative programme of events for 2019.

The Department supported community-led commemorations of the Soloheadbeg Ambush of 21 January, 1919 in collaboration with Tipperary County Council and Seán Hogan's rescue at Knocklong Railway Station on 13 May, 1919 in collaboration with Limerick City and County Council.

The annual Easter Sunday commemoration of the 1916 Rising at the GPO, took place on 21 April 2019 (organised by the Department of the Taoiseach), it was preceded by a commemoration in Glasnevin

Cemetery led by Minister Madigan, which included wreath-laying ceremonies at the Sigerson Monument and at the graves of Edward Holywood and Peader Kearney.

100 years of Women in Political Life

A ‘pop-up’ museum curated by historian Dr Sinéad McCoole, entitled ***100 Years of Women in Politics and Public Life, 1918 - 2018*** was opened by the Minister on 14 December 2018 in Dublin Castle’s Coach House. In 2019 the ‘pop-up’ travelled to Limerick City, Letterkenny and Roscommon before returning to Dublin to the Industry & Commerce Building on Kildare Street, current home to both the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation. A programme of supporting local events was delivered at each venue.

The Commemorations Unit directly supported a number of other initiatives during 2019, including:

- The substantive **Beyond 2022 -Ireland’s Virtual Record Treasury** initiative led by Trinity College Dublin in collaboration with a host of national and international partners and contributors. At a launch event on 5 December, the Taoiseach accompanied by Minister Madigan, announced €2.5m in Government funding for the initiative;
- A collaboration between RTÉ and UCC on the development of a digital offering based on the bestselling ***Atlas of the Irish Revolution***;
- Funding to local authorities to develop local commemorative events and initiatives under the Decade of Centenaries Programme; and
- **Flanders Fields Bursaries** assisted two Irish history students to work on the *List of Names Project* in the Flanders Fields Museum.

History Ireland Hedge School Programme

The Department supported History Ireland in a collaborative initiative which saw mini conferences deal with a diverse range of topics and raise public awareness of commemorations at regional and local level. Six Hedge Schools took place:

- 12 April 2019: Linen Hall Library (Belfast) – ‘*A Century of Women' from 1919 in the wake of the Great War up to 2019*
- 23 April 2019: Cobh – *The Irish Revolution – local or global?*
- 15 May 2019: Edinburgh University: *Scotland and the global Irish Revolution*
- 19 September 2019: Malahide Community School - *A Century on – how do we view the War of Independence*
- 8 November 2019: Galway Mechanics Institute: *Labour, the North and the National Question*
- 9 November 2019: Ballyshannon – ‘*Mobilise the poets*’- *art and culture in the Irish Revolution*

Publications and Electronic Media

The Department continued a number of collaborative initiatives with other partners including:

- History Ireland’s publication ***A Global History of the Irish Revolution*** was circulated to post-primary schools,
- 75,000 copies of The Irish Times’s 2019 Centenary Supplement ***1919 War and Peace*** were circulated to post primary schools, exploring the historical events and themes of 1919; and

- The Century Ireland online historical newspaper project, produced by a team of researchers at Boston College Ireland and hosted by RTÉ, telling the story of events in Ireland a century ago; and
- The website *decadeofcentenaries.com* was operated by History Ireland in partnership with the Department.



Goal B - Built and Natural Heritage

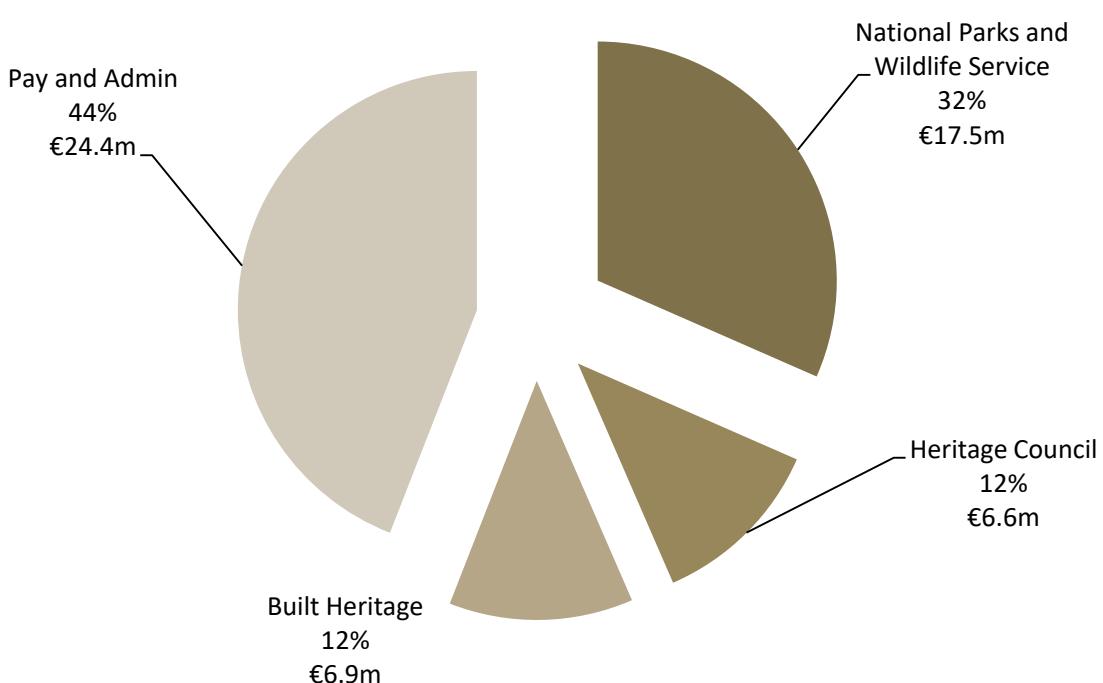
To conserve, protect, manage and present our built and natural heritage for its intrinsic value and as an inspiration to creativity and environmental appreciation as well as a support to local communities, regional economic development and sustainable employment.

This goal is broadly the responsibility of the Heritage Division – composed of the National Parks and Wildlife Service, National Monuments Service, and Built Heritage section – and the Heritage Council, a body under Department's aegis, who pursue it through six High Level Strategies. The Department incurred €55.4m of expenditure on these strategies in 2019, €24.4m of which was pay related, reflecting the significant proportion of the Department's staff employed in maintaining our National Parks and Nature Reserves, providing scientific services, promoting the conservation of biological diversity, implementing the Wildlife Act (as amended) and Habitats and Bird Directives through the National Parks and Wildlife Service, and staffing the National Monuments Service.

The three main expenditure areas for the programme are:

- Expenditure on conservation of biological diversity and the protection of wildlife and our natural heritage through the National Parks and Wildlife Service of nearly €17.5m;
- Support of €6.6m for the work of the Heritage Council, which plays a vital role in promoting awareness of the natural and built heritage of Ireland; and,
- Support of €6.9m for initiatives to enhance and protect our built heritage, including the Built Heritage Investment Scheme and support for the Irish Heritage Trust.

Expenditure on Goal B by main item of expenditure, 2019



Strategy 1: Effective delivery of heritage services

Ensuring heritage services are delivered to the customer as effectively as possible, in collaboration with other partners

Peatlands Council

In 2019, the Department, in conjunction with the Peatlands Council, continued its efforts to conserve and protect of Ireland's raised bog special areas of conservation (SACs) within the framework of the EU Habitats Directive.

The Peatlands Council received 7 appeal requests in 2019 in relation to the decisions made by this Department on applications under the Cessation of Turf Cutting Compensation Scheme. The Peatlands Council upheld the Departments decision in each case.

Peatlands Strategy Implementation Group

The Peatlands Strategy Implementation Group, established in 2016 under the National Peatlands Strategy to bring all relevant Government Departments, agencies and semi-state bodies together, progressed work on its second report to Government on the implementation of the Strategy.

National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS)

Ireland's natural heritage is ultimately dependent on land owners, managers and a wide range of bodies with regulatory and other functions. For example, much of Ireland's terrestrial biodiversity is dependent on particular types of farming and forestry practices.

In 2019, the National Parks and Wildlife Service of the Department worked with various stakeholders, including landowners, farmers, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) and many others, to promote and support farming and forestry in ways that benefit nature. This has been approached both from a policy and an 'on-the-ground' level. NPWS were involved in LIFE projects relating to beneficial farming and forestry, European Innovation Partnerships led by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, national Agri-Environmental Schemes (including GLAS and NPWS Farm Plan Scheme) and management of lands under NPWS ownership. NPWS Scientific Unit also developed Native Woodland Scheme proposals for restoration of woodlands at 5 sites managed by NPWS/DCHG.

The Science and Biodiversity Unit drafted Ireland's next "Prioritised Action Framework for the Implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives 2021-2027". This framework or PAF is designed to clarify and prioritise the necessary conservation measures in all Natura 2000 sites for the period 2021-2027. The PAF identifies appropriate funding requirements and delivery mechanisms but is not a binding commitment of expenditure. However, it is expected to be used by Ireland and the EU Commission to inform EU operational programmes such as the next CAP, EMFAF and national plans. Consultation meetings were held with some of the relevant Government Departments and agencies in 2019, including DAFM and Teagasc. Further consultation with landowners and other stakeholders

will be undertaken, following which, the Framework Document will be submitted for Government approval before being forwarded to the Commission.

The designation process for SACs and SPAs continued, and 270 SACs and 150 SPAs were formally designated with Statutory Instruments as of December 2019.

National Monuments Service

The Department's National Monuments Service maintained its focus on protection of the archaeological heritage resource through implementation and enforcement of legislation. As the number of development-led archaeological interventions continues to rise significantly in line with growth in the economy, substantially higher number of excavation and survey licences were processed and monitored in accordance with National Monuments legislation. Stakeholder engagement in relation to the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) and the release of new editions of satellite imagery has seen exponential growth in the number of reports of newly identified monuments referred from 'citizen archaeologists'. The numbers of new SMR entries rose to 1503 in 2019, up from 805 in 2018. A doubling of the level of notices received of works at or adjacent to monuments over recent years is also indicative of an increasing awareness amongst landowners of their responsibilities to protect monuments from inappropriate interventions.

The Department continued to promote awareness of the importance of protecting our monuments by working with various stakeholders, including the Office of Public Works, on our monuments and properties in state care; the Department of Agriculture Food and Marine, which provides grant assistance for farm/forestry improvements; and the Department of Rural and Community Development, which supports grants for heritage development projects under the URDF and RRDF programmes. Development of archaeological education programmes continued with the Department of Education and Skills with a particular competition for primary schools in the design of an Emoji for heritage linking into the development of Heritage Ireland 2030.

Regular liaison was maintained with utility and infrastructure providers with which a number of codes of practice have been agreed, aimed at safeguarding archaeological sites and monuments (e.g. Bord na Móna, Transport Infrastructure Ireland). In addition, awareness programmes continued with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Teagasc, and farm organisations aimed at increasing understanding of issues in relation to farming and archaeology.

The Department continued to work with the Burren Programme Steering Group and local stakeholders to protect this sensitive area. Collaboration with the Rathcroghan European Innovation Partnership (EIP-Agri) was strengthened as efforts were made to ensure the preservation and farming sustainability of the archeological landscape of the Roscommon ancient royal site. Co-operation with the Built Heritage Section covering cross-over concerns of archaeology and architecture resulted in the commencement of common projects, a joint symposium and presentations and publications. The strategic partnership with Fáilte Ireland and OPW continued, with work at various key state care monuments and properties.

The National Monuments Service has had positive engagement with the Office of Public Works and all relevant stakeholders in relation to the National Flood Relief Programme with a view to ensuring that adequate structures are put in place to effectively address the potential impacts on the archaeological and built heritage from the implementation of these schemes. In addition, engagement with Irish Water continued over establishing similar strategies to mitigating impact. Investigations were carried out in respect of 134 reports of threat or damage to monuments. Four rescue projects were progressed in terms of post excavation analysis of human remains. 1212 excavation licences and 122 dive licences were issued along with 295 consents for the use of detection devices. NMS introduced a new compliance procedure under which all incoming applications for archaeological excavation licences are screened against the applicant's compliance with requirements under previously held licences to submit reports on archaeological excavations within specified time-scales. This compliance measure builds on steps taken in 2016 to 2017 to ensure that all excavation licences are subject to conditions specifying that failure to comply with a licence condition is grounds for refusal of further licences pending remedying of the non-compliance. It forms part of a series of measures being taken to strengthen regulatory procedures with a view to supporting and maintaining high standards of archaeological practice. NMS handled over 205 compliance cases in 2019.

70 consents for works were granted under Section 14 of the National Monuments Act and a further 116 extensions to existing work projects were issued. There were 37 Ministerial Directions issued for archaeological works on national road projects. On-going maintenance of the sites and monuments record continued and work on the mapping, file management, and data components for counties Westmeath and Kilkenny, in particular, was progressed to near completion. In addition, the Department advanced its work in up-dating its records on the online Historic Environment Viewer with a particular focus on the counties on the western seaboard of Counties Mayo, Galway, Clare and commencing in County Limerick. An additional 1503 records were added to the Sites and Monuments Record in 2019..

Work continued on the compilation of data for the Historic Wreck Viewer which launched in 2018 with over 100 additional entries edited. The Viewer will ultimately contain information on all of the 18,000 wrecks from all periods located off Irish shores and in inland waterways.

Work progressed on the survey and investigation of a number of recently discovered logboats on Lough Corrib which have yielded an assemblage of archaeological finds ranging in date from the Neolithic to the Post Medieval periods. The purpose of these on-going investigations is to assess the threats to these sites from a variety of sources and, in consultation with the National Museum of Ireland, to devise a long-term management strategy for them.

Built Heritage

Local Authorities

The Department worked with the 31 local authorities in 2019 to deliver supports to some of the owners and custodians of approximately 49,000 protected structures and other historic structures across the country. These supports include capital grant schemes as well as the provision of expert advice, and CPD events for Architectural Conservation Officers.

Capital Investment Programmes

A total of €3.3m was allocated in capital funding for conservation projects in 2019 under two Built Heritage grant schemes, which are generally administered through the local authorities.

The Built Heritage Investment Scheme is a scheme for the repair and conservation of structures on the local authority Record of Protected Structures. It is designed to leverage private capital for investment in small scale conservation projects across the country and to support the employment of skilled conservation professionals. . Grants of €2.39m were paid in 2019 for 316 projects across the country. Nearly 16,000 days of employment were created in the conservation and construction industries, while helping to regenerate urban and rural areas. The scheme also leveraged over €4m of capital investment.

The Historic Structures Fund 2019 was for larger scale conservation and enhancement to heritage structures and historic buildings, in both private and public ownership, for the benefit of communities and the public. Grants of €1.77m were paid, 67 projects were funded and over 8,000 days of employment were created under the Fund in 2019.

Heritage Council

The Department provided €6.588m in funding to the Heritage Council in 2019, including capital funding of €1m for the delivery of the Historic Towns Initiative.

The **Historic Towns Initiative**, is a joint undertaking by the Department and the Heritage Council which aims to promote the heritage-led regeneration of Ireland's historic towns. This programme includes works to significant historic buildings, streetscape conservation and the public realm and demonstrates the effective way that heritage can be used to regenerate urban centres. In 2019 funding of €1m was shared between Nenagh, Boyle, Letterkenny, Navan, Kilrush and Ballina

Among the highlights of the Council's activities in 2019 was **National Heritage Week 2019 (Pastimes – Past times)** which explored the fascinating ways our pastimes have been shaped by centuries of storytelling, craft, sport and music, and which saw over 423,000 people attending more than 2,000 events right across the country.

The Heritage Council operated a number of Grant Schemes and Programmes in 2019 including the Heritage in Schools Programme, through which over 1,000 primary schools received 2,500 visitors. Some 60 institutions took part in the Museum Standards Programme for Ireland which benchmarks and promotes professional standards in the care of collections. Other initiatives included the Adopt a Monument Scheme, which received funding from Creative Ireland, and aims to bring local heritage from the periphery into the heart of a community.

The Heritage Council provided funding for a range of bodies in 2019 including the Irish Landmark Trust, The Discovery Programme, the Wicklow Uplands Council and the Irish Walled Towns Network, which now has 29 member towns from across Ireland, north and south. Funding support provided by the Heritage Council to County Heritage Plans contributes to the operational work programmes of Heritage Officers in local authorities. Twenty-nine local authorities received funding through this programme in 2019 to deliver 67 projects. The Heritage Council continues to support the Heritage

Officers Programme, from financial input to training and development. The programme marked its 20th anniversary in 2019.

The National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) is the name given to a programme established by the Heritage Council in 2006. The programme is structured as a contract for services and has been operated under two publicly-tendered contracts entered into between the Council and a private company. The contract with the company has been extended until the end of 2020. The NBDC addresses the need identified by the Council that data on Ireland's biodiversity be collected, recorded and fully accessible to the public. It is funded jointly by the Heritage Council and the Department. In 2019 the Centre facilitated 24 workshops which provided training to 399 participants on the identification and recording of Ireland's biodiversity. It received just over 125,000 biodiversity records through the citizen science portal. The data centre is funded by the Department and the Heritage Council. A review of the governance, operating and financial models underpinning this important work was completed in 2019 and a working group has been established to implement the finding of this report. The outcome of the review will inform the next request for tender. Like all public contracts, this work is subject to public procurement rules.

Office of Public Works

The Department provides funding to the OPW for the conservation, preservation or presentation of historic properties and national monuments under the guardianship of the Minister and managed by the OPW. Funding of €378,000 was provided in 2019 to the OPW to assist conservation works at Emo Court, Co. Laois and Brú na Bóinne, Co. Louth

Other bodies

The Department provided €650,000 in funding in 2019 for the Irish Heritage Trust to support its work at Fota House and Gardens (including the restoration of the Head Gardener's Cottage), Strokestown House and Famine Museum, Johnstown Castle and 11 Parnell Square.

Support for other bodies included the Irish Architecture Foundation, the Irish Architectural Archive, the Irish Historic Houses Association, ICOMOS Ireland and The Follies Trust in their respective areas of architectural and heritage protection.

The Department provided advice on architectural heritage matters throughout 2019 to, among others, Waterways Ireland, OPW, Fáilte Ireland, the EU Joint Programming Initiative, the Environmental Protection Agency and to other Sections within the Department.

Strategy 2: Ensuring compliance with international and national heritage obligations

Ensuring effective implementation of the appropriate policies, legislation, actions to comply with our EU and national heritage obligations

Natural Heritage

Legislation

During 2019, the Department continued to review and update nature conservation legislation in order to formally designate Special Protection Areas and to transpose the 2014 Environmental Impact Assessment Directive.

Court cases

The Department worked closely the Chief State Solicitor's Office, the Office of the Attorney General and other Government Departments with respect to environment-focused judicial reviews, to ensure the best possible response to challenges which may impact on Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation. The Department took an active role in three environmental court cases – one from Ireland and two from Belgium – that were referred to the European Court of Justice.

Peatlands Management

A programme of conservation measures set out within the National Raised Bog Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) Management Plan 2017-2022 continued in 2019. The Plan sets out the roadmap for the long-term management, conservation and restoration of Ireland's protected raised bogs in keeping with legal obligations, in particular, under the EU Habitats Directive. Key measures include the restoration through best practice of the SAC and Natural Heritage Areas raised bog network and the implementation of measures to ensure the continued conservation of Ireland's protected raised bogs.

Raised Bog Restoration Strategy

In 2019 restoration measures were completed on 7 raised bog SACs (Ardagullion Bog, Co. Longford, Carrowbehy/Caher Bog, Co. Roscommon, Carrownagappul Bog, Co. Galway, Clara Bog, Co. Offaly, Raheenmore Bog, Co. Offaly, Moyclare Bog, Co. Offaly and Ferbane Bog, Co. Offaly) under a €5.4m five year project funded through the EU LIFE Natura 2014-2020 programme to restore active raised bog (a priority habitat under the EU Habitats Directive) on 12 raised bog SACs in Ireland. Restoration works on the remainder of the project sites are to be completed in 2020.

Further restoration measures were completed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service of the Department on State-owned lands within Shankill West Bog Special Areas of Conservation, Co. Galway with preparatory work undertaken on other sites. Following the announcement of €5m in Budget 2020 for peatlands restoration, the procurement of services and the process of the engagement of a contractor to carry out works commenced in relation to undertaking restoration measures on over 1,800 hectares of raised bog on up to 9 special area of conservation and natural heritage area sites across 7 counties in 2020.

In 2019 there was also a continued focus on the development of Drainage Management Plans for raised bog Special Areas of Conservation and the production of Restoration Plans for the raised bog Natural Heritage Area network.

The National Parks and Wildlife Service, in conjunction with An Garda Síochána (AGS) and the Air Corps continued to monitor turf cutting sites. An estimated 306 plots were cut on 17 of the protected sites, representing a decline of 34 from the 2017 estimate and, in overall terms, a significant decline when compared with commencement 2011 levels (1,500 plots cut).

Under the Cessation of Turf Cutting Compensation Scheme 3,214 annual payments and 73 deliveries of turf were made in 2019. Once-off incentive payments of €500 were also made in respect of 76 applicants. Work continued on the relocation of turf cutters from raised bog SACs to non-designated bogs.

Cessation of Turf Cutting Compensation Scheme, 2016-2019

	To end-2016	To end - 2017	To end - 2018	To end – 2019
Applications received	3,482	3,905	4,039	4,113
Payments made	11,536	14,166	17,033	20,160
Turf Deliveries	902	995	1,077	1,150
Legal Agreements returned	1,827	2,011	2,102	2,148
Once-off Payments (€500)	1,703	1,824	1,873	1,948

Designations

The formal Special Area of Conservation (SAC) designation programme continued with 270 SACs formally designated by Statutory Instrument by the end of 2019.

The formal Special Protection Area (SPA) designation programme continued with 150 SPAs formally designated by Statutory Instrument by the end of 2019.

National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS)

An amendment to the Wildlife (Amendment) Bill 2016 was passed by the Seanad in November 2019. This amendment provides that every relevant public body will be obliged, in the performance of its functions, to have regard to policies, guidelines and objectives to promote the conservation of biodiversity and the National Biodiversity Action Plan.

The implementation to date of the National Biodiversity Action Plan (2017-2021) was reviewed in 2019. Of the 119 Actions in the Plan, 8 are implemented, 97 are ongoing and, for 14, there has been limited or no progress. 88 of the 119 actions are of an ongoing or open-ended nature.

The EU Habitats and Birds Directives require detailed reporting every 6 years on the status of habitats and species listed in the Habitats Directive and of all naturally occurring bird species in the State. These reports were submitted to the European Commission in 2019. The reports to the Commission are lengthy and voluminous, so a summary report on the status of habitats and species was published; and three shorter reports on seabirds, wetland birds and widespread species of the countryside were published online on the NPWS website www.npws.ie.

In early 2019, the Department submitted Ireland's 6th National Report to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity. This 4-yearly report reviewed Ireland's progress in relation to the five Strategic Goals and 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets set by the CBD in 2010 for implementation by 2020. It also reviewed Ireland's progress on achieving the targets set out in the National Biodiversity Action Plan.

Detailed site-specific conservation objectives were published for 39 Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) in 2019.

In 2019, NPWS commissioned or carried out scientific research projects that are filling data gaps in order to identify and tailor effective conservation measures for various habitats and species such as offshore reef, fens, bogs and their hydrology, seals, hares, natterjack toad, bats, crayfish, cetaceans and seabirds.

For instance, 2019 was the final survey year of "SeaROVER", a three-year survey programme investigating deep sea habitats, with the aim of assessing and monitoring Ireland's rich offshore marine biodiversity. The programme was jointly funded by the Irish Government and the EU's European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. This cross-government initiative was supported by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment as part of the Marine Institute's implementation of the EMFF Marine Biodiversity Scheme. NPWS participated in the offshore surveys, which used the remotely operated underwater vehicle *Holland I* to investigate deep water habitats and species far off the west coast of Ireland.

The Department also won a Civil Service Excellence and Innovation Award in the category Research, Analytics and Insight, for its role in the ObSERVE programme, which it developed in collaboration with the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment. The programme, which concluded in 2017, had generated high quality data for cetacean and seabird at sea distributions and abundance estimates across the Exclusive Economic Zone.

Considerable effort went into two projects in 2019 that secured substantial funding from the EU LIFE programme. The first of these projects, LIFE "Wild Atlantic Nature", will last for 9 years and has a total budget of €20,623,808, with an EU contribution of €12,374,000. The project will promote delivery of the Prioritised Action Framework for the Birds and Habitats Directives nationally, with a particular focus on awareness-raising of the value to society of protecting the Natura 2000 sites; and in parallel, to improve the conservation and management of blanket bog habitats in the North and West.

The second project, "CrexLIFE", seeks to improve Corncrake conservation status in Ireland by the enhancement of the Special Protection Area network and surrounding farmland. It will have a 5-year lifespan and a total budget of €5.9m, including EU funding of €4.3m.



The National Adaptation Framework (NAF) set out the context to ensure sectors, including biodiversity, can identify and assess the key risks and vulnerabilities of climate change, implement climate resilience actions and ensure climate adaptation considerations are mainstreamed into all local, regional and national policy making. Biodiversity differs from the other sectors that developed Adaptation Plans in that it isn't so much a "sector" as a fundamental underpinning of those other sectors, such as Agriculture, Forestry etc. The Biodiversity Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan was published in October 2019. Actions within this Plan are aimed at improving sustainable agriculture, better soil and land management and, most urgently, the restoration of natural systems.

In addition, the Department, in conjunction with the EPA, co-funded a research call through the EU BiodivERsA strand which will investigate the consequences of climate change on biodiversity and the potential for nature-based solutions for mitigating climate change. 2020 following evaluation by the EPA.

In 2019, significant progress was made on the implementation of EU Invasive Alien Species Regulation (1143/2014) and development of effective legislative and policy framework to manage the introduction and spread of invasive alien species. Draft legislation to fully implement the EU IAS Regulation, and to update and strengthen existing national regulations around invasive alien species, was finalised in the Department with the advice of the Legal Advisor and has been sent to the OPC for settling and finalisation which is expected to be completed during 2020.

Ireland is a signatory, but not yet a party, to the Nagoya Protocol to the Convention on Biological Diversity. The EU ABS Regulation (511/2014) provides for a framework for implementation of the Protocol in the European Union. In 2019, national legislation in Ireland to transpose elements of the EU ABS Regulation which are the competency of Member States was completed, with the consequent European Union (Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit-Sharing) Regulations 2019 made in June 2019.

The Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht is the competent authority in Ireland for the implementation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and NPWS is responsible for expediting the functions of the CITES Management Authority on the Minister's behalf. In this regard, NPWS issued a total of 1,099 CITES permits and certificates in 2019. NPWS also serviced the EU CITES Management meetings that take place in Brussels four times a year.

Secondary legislation was also introduced in 2019 to implement CITES simplified procedures for the export of certain dead specimens, in accordance with Art 19 of EU Implementing Regulation 865/2006. This legislation provides for authorised persons to use pre-populated CITES export permits in certain cases and allows the Department to handle significantly increased volumes of CITES exports without a detrimental effect on the operations of the CITES Management Authority.

In 2019, the National Parks and Wildlife Service, in its capacity as the national zoo licensing authority, inspected 69 zoos. At the beginning of 2019, there were over 90 licensed zoos in Ireland for assessment but a number of closures and regulatory exemptions has reduced the number throughout the year. It is expected that the number will increase in 2020 due to scheduled inspections of hotel-based falconry displays which also come under the zoo licensing regulations.

Legislation, Licensing and Property Management

In 2019, the Department received and processed 8,063 planning applications which were referred to the Minister in her role as a statutory consultee under the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) for observations or submissions on the implications of proposed developments which may have an impact on the built or natural heritage. The heritage sections of the Department were also consulted in relation to proposed developments at pre-planning stage.

In addition, the Minister in her role as a ‘consultation body’ or ‘prescribed body’ under various other statutes received over 2,245 referrals from public authorities in 2019 for observations or submissions on the implications of the activities they are regulating, which may have an impact on the built or natural heritage (e.g. foreshore licence applications, tree-felling licences).

The Department is responsible for the licensing requirements under the Wildlife Acts and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 to 2015. Just over 8,800 licences and permits were issued by the Department for a variety of activities in 2019, of which 66% (over 5,800) were issued for deer-hunting compared to a total of almost 8,300 licences and permits issued in 2018.

Built Heritage

National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) Programme

The completion in 2019 of Phase 3 of Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown survey and Phase 14 of the Dublin City survey will enable the Minister to issue recommendations for proposed additions to the Record of Protected Structures of these local authorities during 2020. National Policy on Architecture

A public consultation discussion document, outlining the scope and ambitions of a new National Policy on Architecture, was developed in 2019 by a steering committee, chaired by the Department and including officials from the Office of Public Works, the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, the Department of Education and Skills, The Health Service Executive, the City and County Architects Association, the Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland, the schools of architecture, the Arts Council and the Irish Architecture Foundation. The proposed new Policy will support long-term planning strategies and will assist in addressing key issues including societal well-

being, climate change and urban regeneration. A public consultation period commenced at the end of 2019 and the Department will work with stakeholders to consult as widely as possible as well as holding and contributing to various workshops and events in the early part of 2020.

National Adaptation Framework

On 31 October 2019, the Department published the Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan for Built and Archaeological Heritage, as part of the National Adaptation Framework (NAF) coordinated by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment. The Plan is one of nine adaptation plans prepared by seven different Government Departments as part of the NAF. The sectors included cover natural and cultural capital, critical infrastructure, water resource, flood risk management and public health and set out the climate adaptation measures necessary to ensure that the State is ready to protect people from the negative effects of climate change in Ireland and the steps needed to limit any damage caused. The plan was developed through a series of one-to-one meetings with organisations and bodies likely to have a strategic interest in the plan. Two stakeholder consultation workshops were held in Dublin and Galway and a public consultation process was conducted in May/June 2019.

National Monuments Service

Drafting of the consolidated and updated Monuments and Archaeological Heritage Bill was concluded during the year.

The Department continued to engage with the Brú na Bóinne World Heritage Site Management Plan, including obligations to engage with the community at local level. The new Brú na Bóinne Visitor Centre was opened in December 2019, as part of the Department's Strategic Partnership with Fáilte Ireland and the OPW to enhance interpretation and presentation of the World Heritage Site. This partnership also saw the launch of the new interpretation at Ormond Castle. There was continued engagement with key stakeholders in the area of World Heritage, including the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, local authorities, and ICOMOS Ireland. The Department initiated its review of Ireland's Tentative List Of World Heritage sites and continued its funding of the Royal Irish Academy World Heritage Directed Research Fund.

Public consultation was undertaken in relation to a new 10 year management plan for the Skellig Michael World Heritage Site, and the processes of Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment for the plan, was initiated. The new Management Plan, to be published by end 2020, will set out priorities for the management of the World Heritage site and maintenance of its Outstanding Universal Value.

In developing a new national heritage policy- Heritage Ireland 2030- a public consultation document published in November 2018 posed a series of key questions as part of a nationwide conversation around heritage. Over the 4 month consultation period, some 70 public events were held to raise awareness of Heritage Ireland 2030. Workshop events were held in partnership with key heritage agencies. By March 2019, 2,156 submissions had been received. The analysis of the submissions by a multi-disciplinary team was presented at a Heritage Ireland 2030 Information Day in Dublin Castle in May 2019. The detailed analysis of all submissions was published in November 2019.

In keeping with the Department's role in the decade of centenaries the National Monuments Service, in collaboration with Geological Survey Ireland, INFOMAR, The Marine Institute and a number of independent experts, produced a book on the wreck of the RMS *Lusitania* which also includes contemporary images and recently acquired seabed survey imagery of a cross section of the over 1000 vessels lost in the waters around Ireland during WWI. The *Climate Change Adaptation Report for Built and Archaeological Heritage* was launched in November 2019 as part of the Government's Climate Action Plan and the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht Climate Change Advisory Group of stakeholders and experts met on 21 November to explore implementation and review of the plan over coming years.

Strategy 3: Promoting understanding of our rich heritage

Promoting greater awareness, appreciation and understanding of Ireland's rich heritage for its intrinsic value and as a cultural, educational and recreational amenity for individuals and communities, and also as a valuable resource for business and Ireland's green image

During 2019, the Department's Creative Ireland Programme partnered with the **Heritage Council** to deliver a series of bespoke heritage-based initiatives to explore their potential to contribute to more inclusive, cohesive and economically vibrant local communities. The projects included *Adopt a Monument* which saw 15 local communities 'adopting' a monument in their own locality and working with experts to put in place plans and solutions to address critical conservation issues; the *Natural Senses* project which together with Birdwatch Ireland, Bat Conservation Ireland and the National Council for the Blind of Ireland, focused on bringing a heightened experience and awareness of the natural environment to people with sight impairment; and *Wildlife Sanctuary* which worked with the Irish Peatlands Conservancy Council and Abbeyleix Bog Trust to facilitate the involvement and cultural exchange of persons seeking asylum and conservation volunteers centred in County Laois.

The Creative Ireland Programme has also progressed a number of initiatives which use artistic and cultural creativity to further develop and promote a range of heritage initiatives. These include:

- *iCAN* – supporting the National Museum of Ireland to further develop the Irish Community Archive Network, through which groups of volunteers in local communities create online digital archives where they can record and reflect their community's history, heritage and culture, guided and supported by local heritage professionals and practitioners.
- *The Historic Houses of Ireland (HHI)* – working with HHI to explore innovative ways of using Irish historic houses, their outbuildings, gardens and demesnes to benefit their owners, local communities and Ireland's culture and heritage sectors under the themes of Creative Communities, Creative Spaces, and Creative Children.*ReImagine* – a community-led, architecture and design project to improve six selected local areas (Tallaght, Co. Dublin, Kilrush, Co. Clare, Mohill, Co. Leitrim, Loughrea, Co. Galway, Kells, Co. Meath and Letterkenny, Co. Donegal); and
- *Making Our Impression* – enabling a significant skills transfer project at the National Print Museum, with retired printers and compositors sharing their specialist knowledge and skills with groups of young designers and printers, who in turn have committed to passing on the craft to others.

The Creative Ireland Programme has also supported Local Authorities to progress a range of projects that have not only raised awareness but have sought innovative and creative solutions to regenerate, reuse, adapt and conserve elements of our historic built environment. Highlights of 2019 include support for an innovative project in Limerick City entitled "*Connect to the Grid: 250 years of Limericks Urban Planning*" whose main focus is regeneration, conservation and reuse; Donegal County Council's *A Stitch in Time* project which funded twelve thatching projects in 2019; and in Offaly, an innovative project to conserve and restore a series of eleven follies throughout the county with significance to local communities and are important elements of the rich and varied landscape of the county – the focus in 2019 was *Ballycumber Folly*.

Peatlands Community Engagement Scheme

In 2019 the Minister announced a call for applications under the Department's Peatlands Community Engagement Scheme, to encourage local peatland communities, local organisations and individuals to engage with the Department in relation to the conservation of raised bogs and to promote public engagement with and awareness of our natural heritage.

Funding of €131,000 was awarded to 13 projects in 2019. There was a wide variety of projects supported under the scheme. The projects ranged from the upgrading of walking trails, educational programmes, field studies and walks, recording of oral history of the bogs, photographic exhibitions, surveying and monitoring of raised bog and taking core peat samples to collecting pollen for radiocarbon dating. The Department also supported the engagement of a part-time development officer for the Community Wetlands Forum.



National Monuments Service (NMS)

The Department's National Monuments Service continued to work with the OPW, which manages over 1000 sites in State care, to ensure that these sites are maintained and conserved, to update survey information and to provide improved visitor facilities for the many visitors and for future generations.

Under the strategic partnership with OPW and Fáilte Ireland mentioned above, NMS continued to work to ensure the quality of information presented at our key heritage sites was of the highest quality and authenticity. The Department advanced its strategic partnership working with the OPW and Fáilte Ireland to identify sites for future investment. It acquired Portumna Gate Lodge in order to enhance the protection of Portumna Castle demesne. The Department also worked with local authorities, stakeholders and communities to progress the conservation management of our key heritage sites, including the Hill of Tara.

The National Monuments Service undertook high levels of public engagement including nationwide public lectures by staff, radio interviews, TV appearances and publications all of which contributed to publicising events and collaborations relevant to the work of the National Monuments Service. The 2nd annual National Monuments Service public archaeology conference was held in Dublin Castle in October 2019, the event- ‘Encountering the Sacred: the archaeology and heritage of pilgrimage’ included a wide range of papers presented by archaeologists from Ireland, the UK, Europe and the United States. Also launched by the Minister in December 2019 was the ‘RMS Lusitania - the Story of a Wreck’ publication which was the result of collaboration between the National Monuments Service, Geological Survey of Ireland and the Marine Institute and which garners huge interest both nationally and internationally.

NMS social media platforms were used as an outlet to disseminate archaeological information to interested individuals, communities and heritage professionals nationwide and abroad and are also used to increase traffic to the NMS website and generate greater awareness of the Historic Environment Viewer and Wreck Viewer.

NMS funded an RIA Research Seminar (*Revealing the Past*), presenting results of research excavations funded by NMS/DCHG through the Academy’s grants structures over recent years.

Stage 2 of the Collaborative Archive Project (CAP): Killarney District commenced, focused on devising catalogues of all relevant files, sources and archival material relevant to the national monuments in the Killarney District.

Natural Heritage

The first National Biodiversity Conference, ‘New Horizons for Nature’, was held in February 2019 and brought over 500 delegates together, including 90 speakers, to talk, listen, learn and explore the way forward for biodiversity in Ireland. Delegates included policy makers, academics, businesses, community groups, conservationists, ecologists, farmers, fishers, foresters, local authorities, NGOs and politicians. The objective of the conference was to identify the challenges and explore the solutions on how to work together to achieve our common goal of reversing biodiversity loss and implementing the National Biodiversity Action Plan. Sectors were encouraged to contribute towards the “Seeds for Nature” campaign at the 2019 National Biodiversity Conference in an effort to step up and accelerate progress towards achieving the objectives of the National Biodiversity Action Plan. Notable commitments included to establish a Business and Biodiversity Platform; a Financial Needs Assessment for Biodiversity; the launch of the Community Foundation Ireland Environment and Nature Fund.

The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine supported the Farming For Nature organisation to develop and rollout a number of actions to provide guidance and information supporting nature on farms.

In 2019, the National Parks and Wildlife Service participated in a range of public events with the aim of highlighting Ireland's rich and diverse natural heritage and the need for its protection. These included the Young Scientists' Exhibition, the National Ploughing Championship, and Electric Picnic.

The Department provided funding of €500,000 in support of the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021, at a local level. This funding facilitated work by 28 Local Authorities to implement biodiversity actions including the development of local action and management plans; tackling invasive alien species, pollinator initiatives; co-ordinated regional efforts to survey swifts. The Peatlands Community Engagement Scheme made €200,000 available in 2019 to encourage local communities, local groups, schools and other interested parties to engage with the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht in relation to the conservation and revitalisation of raised bog Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and other raised bog areas and promote public engagement and awareness of our natural heritage.

The Department also provides grants for the funding of various events during Biodiversity Week each year and in 2019 awarded Irish Environmental Network an amount of €25,000 to deliver a range of biodiversity and awareness raising events throughout the country. Biodiversity Week runs in May of each year to coincide with International Day for Biodiversity.

NPWS continued to work to champion biodiversity in local communities. One such example is the Curlew Conservation Programme, whereby predominantly local people were employed in some of the most important breeding Curlew areas, to work with local communities and landowners to deliver conservation measures for the Curlew, which is on the verge of extinction in Ireland. Initiatives in 2019 included the second World Curlew Day, an idea which started in Ireland, whereby local communities came together to celebrate the Curlew, in a mix of various events, including music, song and dance, as well as the Curlew Cup, a football competition involving local schools from the Curlew areas.

The National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC), funded by the Department and the Heritage Council, has an important role in raising awareness and direct engagement. Its website (www.biodiversityireland.ie) provides high quality information for a range of stakeholders on various aspects of biodiversity. Information is directed at individuals, community groups, schools, NGOs and other organisations who have an opportunity to participate in biodiversity events, submit sighting or to contribute to citizen science.

A further 19 Irish Wildlife Manuals were published by NPWS in 2019, in addition to a variety of other scientific publications. By the end of the year 119 reports had been published in the IWM series. This series serves as an accessible record of scientific work carried out or commissioned by the Department under its nature conservation and biodiversity duties.

Ireland's new Red List (No.12) on Terrestrial Mammals was published in 2019, superceding the 2009 publication. It is available on www.npws.ie. The list includes data on all 27 terrestrial mammal species

native to or naturalised in Ireland before 1500. Twenty five of the species were assessed as Least Concern, while one was assessed as Regionally Extinct (Grey Wolf) and one as Vulnerable (Black Rat).

Recording and dissemination of information on species continued during 2019, in conjunction with the National Biodiversity Data Centre and the Centre for Environmental Data and Recording (in Belfast) and relevant experts in Irish species. This included facilitating and participating in training courses.

Built Heritage

Education and Awareness

The Department continued the development of its *Advice Series* for the owners and custodians of historic buildings with the preparation in 2019 of a new volume entitled '*Disaster: a guide to prevention and preparedness in the historic built environment*'. The *Advice Series* is designed to guide those responsible for historic buildings on how best to protect, repair and maintain their properties. It will offer advice on preventing disasters, such as fire and flooding, and preparing disaster risk management plans that can be implemented in an emergency.

The Heritage Council's Heritage in Schools Scheme is a primary school heritage education initiative which facilitates visits to primary schools by a range of Experts on Ireland's natural, cultural and built heritage and is the Heritage Council's main activity for primary schools. The Scheme provides an additional resource for teachers and supports the stated aims and objectives of the Social, Scientific and Environmental Education (SESE) curriculum and emphasise engagement with local heritage through place-based learning and learning in the outdoor classroom. In 2019 over 1,000 primary schools received over 2,500 visits under the scheme.

The Irish Architecture Foundation was supported in the delivery of its awareness and education programme through two of its major funded activities: Open House and the National Architects in Schools Scheme.

The Department continued to support heritage stakeholders and raise awareness of architectural heritage principles and practice and the work of the Department through presentations to the Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland, Engineers Ireland, Construction Industry Federation, Irish Georgian Society, academic institutions and others.

Strategy 4: Improve digital data management

Improving digital data management

2019 saw progress in implementing the external review of Information and Data Management processes and infrastructure which the National Monuments Service (NMS) had commissioned in late 2019. The aim of this review is to reduce the risk of data loss, improve data management behaviour/discipline, ensure efficiencies and remove duplication across various NMS units. The review concluded in 2019 and gave a comprehensive view of the Information and Data Management in NMS.

The NMS Archive Unit produced a Finding Aid listing all archaeological reports available to researchers. This downloadable Finding Aid was published on www.archaeology.ie in January. It will be updated on a biannual basis to reflect new accessions to the archive. The total number of excavation reports in the archive currently stands at 34,449.

In October NMS presented a paper to the Forum on Information Standards in Heritage in Belfast-the Forum aims to develop data standards for use in the heritage sector and ASI talked through Irish regulatory context. NMS part-funded a forum on Digital Heritage in University College Galway on the 18 October 2019, outlining the Department's ambition for digital heritage. Discussions are feeding into an overall policy direction.

Biodiversity monitoring and assessment datasets are available for use by third parties at npws.ie/maps-and-data and are supported by the requirements for data accessibility, common standards and quality assurance set down in the INSPIRE Directive.

The Department is currently working with the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government's INSPIRE Steering Committee on the publication of INSPIRE data on the Ordnance Survey of Ireland INSPIRE GeoPortal website. NPWS have published 45 biodiversity Open Data sets and data set series to date on data.gov.ie. Partner organisations have aligned their biodiversity data publication processes with the Irish Open Data Strategy and a wealth of biodiversity resources are now freely available as Open Data via the Irish Government Open Data Portal website www.data.gov.ie.

All requests for access to NPWS data on habitats and species were also dealt with in a timely manner; these requests come in from a range of other parties, such as government agencies, developers, consultants etc and may be used to inform applications for development consent, and the associated ecological assessments, as well as national plans and programmes.

Strategy 5: Building heritage skills capacity

Building heritage skills capacity to ensure we achieve high standards of planning, management and protection competencies for heritage decision-makers at all levels

National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS)

In 2019, the Department set up a small grant scheme to support and encourage the current network of naturalists and to develop the next generation of specialist recorders. Grants are aimed at volunteer, unpaid recorders, or groups, societies and associations of recorders who have limited/no access to financial supports for their work.

The Department has funded the development of ERICA (the Irish Vegetation Classification tool), this is a web application for assigning your own vegetation data to communities defined by the Irish Vegetation Classification.



National Monument Service (NMS)

The NMS also co-operated with the Department of Rural and Community Development on the Leader heritage scheme. Measures for preventative maintenance of monuments have been included in the latest Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine agri-environmental scheme. In addition, the Department maintained its regular liaison with utility and infrastructure providers, and awareness programmes with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Teagasc, and farm organisations continued. Development of archaeological education programmes continued with the Department of Education and Skills with a particular competition for primary schools in the design of an Emoji for heritage linking into the development of Heritage Ireland 2030.

NMS continued its partnership with the Royal Irish Academy Excavation Grant Scheme, Directed Research Fund and World Heritage Research Fund to support external stakeholders and also continued to work through its new Memorandum of Understanding with the Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland to assist in the advancement of CPD and the future development of standards and best practice guidelines for the profession. Quarterly sets of interviews for first-time applicants for licences to excavate were held in 2019 in cooperation with the National Museum of Ireland to help address capacity issues within the licensed profession. Support for various professional conferences was given through the year.

Built Heritage

The conservation, management and presentation of Ireland's built heritage relies upon a competent workforce. Traditional building craft and conservation skills are essential parts of our heritage that need to be protected and passed on to a new generation. In 2019, work continued at EU level on cultural heritage skills development and this work will be integrated with the actions of *Heritage Ireland 2030*.

In 2019 the Heritage Council delivered a new training programme on the retro-fitting of historic homes to achieve greater energy efficiency. This was funded by the Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland and provided training to building professionals on international best practice. This will continue in 2020.

Strategy 6: Enhancing our EU heritage relationships

Enhancing our EU heritage relationships

National Parks and Wildlife Service

Compilation of information was progressed in 2019 for multiple EU purposes such as Article 17 and Article 12 reporting under the Nature Directives, drafting of Invasive Alien Species and ABS Regulations and preparation of the Prioritised Action Framework for Ireland and the Department attended numerous EU working and expert group meetings in relation to these and other processes.

The KerryLIFE project, for which the Department is the co-ordinating beneficiary, continued its work with farmers and foresters to develop effective measures for the conservation of freshwater pearl mussel. This project is co-financed by the EU. Twelve raised bogs are being restored as part of the EU LIFE funded Living Bog programme.

The Department co-financed an EU LIFE project, co-ordinated by the International Union for Conservation of Nature from 2015-2018, to establish a European Red List of Bryophytes (mosses and liverworts). The results of this work were published in September 2019 (*A miniature World in Decline – European Red List of Mosses, Liverworts and Hornworts*, IUCN 2019). Ireland is an important country for bryophytes, with nearly 50% of the European flora, and the Red List assessments found that 31 Irish species are threatened with extinction at a European level. The Department is now supporting a project to identify the most important areas for bryophyte species conservation in the European region.).

The Department continued to support 2 cross-border collaborative projects, "Cooperation Across Borders for Biodiversity" (2017-2022), funded by EU INTERREG VA to improve the condition of upland SACs and SPAs; and Collaborative Action for the Natura Network, another INTERREG project with Northern Ireland and Scotland, is working to save peatlands and other wetlands supporting threatened species such as curlew and hen harrier.

Preparations continue for the PeacePLUS programme which will provide follow-on to INTERREG.

National Monuments Service

The NMS continued its involvement with the European Archaeological Council, including maintaining its position on the Board. NMS in partnership with OPW hosted EAC's 20th Heritage Management Symposium. The theme of the symposium was 'Archaeological sites and monuments in the care of the state – sharing our experiences'.

Discussions continued with the Embassy of Spain concerning a Memorandum of Understanding in relation to promotion of awareness of shared Underwater Cultural Heritage.

The Department's Chief Archaeologist accompanied the Minister of State in May to meeting of EU Member States Ministers in Charge of Cultural Policy and European Affairs, at which Ireland signed a Declaration for safeguarding heritage in danger.

The NMS continued to assist the EU funded €1.4m CHERISH project. The five-year Ireland-Wales project, is a cross-disciplinary project aimed at raising awareness and understanding of the past, present and near-future impacts of climate change, storminess and extreme weather events on the cultural heritage of our sea and coast.

Built Heritage

The Department's representative on the European Commission Open Method of Coordination working group was the lead editor of the report on the theme of Skills, Training and Knowledge Transfer in Cultural Heritage Professions, which was published in July 2019. Arising from the editorship, the representative gave two presentations at EU level (to the Cultural Affairs Committee in July and the new EU Cultural Heritage Forum in October) on the report. The Department will work with a consortium of European colleagues to prepare an application for funding to Erasmus+ (February 2020 deadline) under the Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills.

Built Heritage and European engagement

Ireland was represented by Department officials on a number of European bodies, including the Council of Europe Steering Committee on Cultural Heritage and the European Heads of Heritage Forum as well as the Edinburgh Group (UK and Ireland). The Department also engages with the relevant directorates of the European Union on built heritage matters and officials attended, and presented at, the expert conference hosted by the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the EU on 'European Heritage – shared experience and regional specificities'.

The Department also represented Ireland as an observer to the Council of Europe's Enlarged Partial Agreement on European Cultural Routes.

Goal C & D - The Irish Language, the Gaeltacht and the Islands

To support the use of the Irish language throughout Ireland and to strengthen its use as the principal community language of the Gaeltacht.

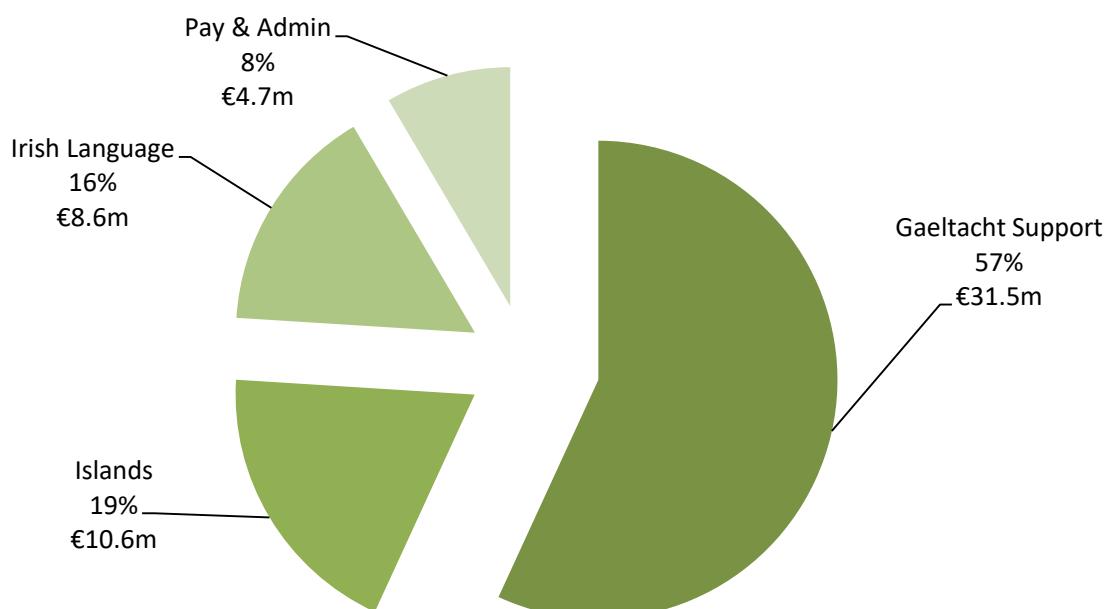
To facilitate the sustainable development of island communities.

These goals are broadly the responsibility of the Irish Language, the Gaeltacht and the Islands Division and the bodies under its aegis – Údarás na Gaeltachta and An Coimisinéir Teanga, who pursue them through four High Level Strategies. The Department incurred €55.3m in pursuit of these strategies in 2019, supporting initiatives within the Gaeltacht areas and the Islands and to support the use of Irish throughout the State through the implementation of the 20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language.

The three areas of expenditure areas within the programme in 2019 were:

- Support for Gaeltacht communities of €31.5m, including €23m in funding for Údarás na Gaeltachta and €8.5m in funding for Gaeltacht Support Schemes;
- Support for Island communities of €10.6m, including infrastructure and lifeline services;
- Support for the Irish language of €8.6m including funding for the work of An Coimisinéir Teanga, Irish Language Support Schemes, and the implementation of the 20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language.

Expenditure on Goals C & D by item of expenditure



Strategy 1: Implementing the 5-Year Action Plan for the 20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language, 2010-2030

Support the Irish language, both inside and outside the Gaeltacht through the implementation of a 5- Year Action Plan for the 20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010- 2030

In order to accelerate implementation of the **20-Year Strategy for the Irish language 2010-2030**, the Department published a 5-Year Action Plan for the Irish Language for the period 2018 to 2022 in June 2018, following Government approval. While Plean Gníomhaíochta 2018-2022 presents an overview of the progress made in advancing the implementation of the strategy since 2010, the primary focus of the plan is on clarifying and presenting actions which will be implemented over the 5-year period from 2018 to 2022 to further underpin the language and by extension, to further support implementation of the strategy.

The plan contains more than 180 specific measures to be implemented by over 60 stakeholders on a cross-Governmental basis over the period, while also outlining a more efficient and effective approach to monitoring progress in order to provide for greater accountability and clarity. Key to this revised approach to monitoring progress will be the publication on an annual basis of a progress report, following Government approval. An oversight group - which has been tasked with monitoring progress, has been established.

Other key highlights of 2019 in support of the Irish language and Gaeltacht regions include:

- **Gaeltacht Community and Language Support Programme – Capital:**

A total allocation of €2.322m was provided for capital projects in 2019. Key measures included:

- The allocation of of €1.022m in support of 55 projects which included the construction and upgrade of language and community facilities in Gaeltacht regions.

- **Gaeltacht Community and Language Support Programme – Current:**

A total allocation of €7.53m was provided for current expenditure in 2019. Key measures included:

- Subvention support to the value of €4.447m via Scéim na bhFoghlaimeoirí Gaeilge in support of 26,00 students, 42 Irish colleges and 712 Gaeltacht households.
- An increased allocation of up to €3.6m over a three year period was approved for the Language Assistants Scheme in 2019 which will benefit Gaeltacht schools participating in the *Policy on Gaeltacht Education 2017-2022* (DES) and enable them to have language assistants for an extra 6 weeks during the school year (equivalent to 32 weeks in total). In the case of post-primary schools, 31 weeks will apply. This measure comes on foot of a measure previously initiated in 2018 by the Department which facilitated the inclusion of a further 32 schools under the scheme, equating to every Gaeltacht school participating in the Policy on Gaeltacht Education.
- Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge, was further supported in the provision of third level courses in their three Gaeltacht centres – in Gaoth Dobhair, Carna and An Cheathrú Rua through the three year funding worth €2.7m which was sanctioned in 2018.
- Scéim na gCampaí Samhraidh: €330,000 was allocated in 2019 to the scheme to support language learning and enrichment opportunities for young people from Gaeltacht areas.

Approximately 6,500 children and 200 summer camps benefitted from the subventions provided under the scheme in 2019.

- A further 12 Gaeltacht-based organisations who provide a range of language-support measures were also funded under the programme.

- **The Language Planning Process:**

A total allocation of €3.2m was provided to advance the implementation of the Language Planning Process in 2019. Key measures included:

- Language plans in respect of 3 Gaeltacht Language Planning Areas were approved in 2019, bringing the total number of approved plans to 16;
- The appointment of 4 Language Planning Officers in Gaeltacht Language Planning areas to implement approved language plans in their communities;
- Notices in accordance with the provisions of section 9 of the Gaeltacht Act 2012 were made in respect of An Clochán Liath, Dungarvan and Tralee were made in February 2018. A further notice was made in June 2018 in respect of Castlebar – effectively commencing the language planning process in those towns. The preparation of language plans was further advanced in the case of Galway City, Daingean Uí Chúis, Co. Kerry, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal and Cork City as well as the Irish Language Networks of Loughrea, Ennis and Clondalkin;
- To further underpin the Language Planning Process in Gaeltacht regions, the domains of early-years, the family and the language-centred traditional arts continued to be supported during 2019. Both Tuismitheoirí na Gaeltachta and Comhar Naónraí na Gaeltachta respectively commenced year two of a three-year funding programme in support of the family and early years respectively. A three-year funding programme was commenced with Ealaín na Gaeltachta Teo in 2019.
- An updated 5th edition of the Language Planning Guidelines was published in January 2019.



Strategy 2: Support the sustainable development of the Gaeltacht and island communities

Support the sustainable development of the Gaeltacht and island communities particularly through job creation and retention of existing employment

The overall Exchequer allocation for Údarás na Gaeltachta, the regional authority responsible for the economic, social and cultural development of the Gaeltacht, was €22.992m in 2019. At year end, total employment in Údarás client companies stood at 8,437, of which 7,844 were full-time jobs and 523 were part-time jobs. Údarás client companies created 593 new full-time jobs during 2019. When job losses are taken into consideration, there was a net increase of 219 jobs overall.

In addition, capital funding of €2.9m was made available for Údarás na Gaeltachta for 3 key tourism, innovation and community development projects in the Gaeltacht regions of Cork, Kerry and Mayo under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund, while planning continues for the provision of an innovation and marine development centre at Páirc na Mara in Cill Chiaráin, Co. Galway. The project represents a joint venture between Údarás na Gaeltachta, NUI Galway and Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) and has been approved for capital funding of €2m from the Regional Enterprise Development Fund.

Údarás na Gaeltachta continued to administer various social employment schemes in 2019, which are funded by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and play an important role in providing work experience and training for Gaeltacht communities. There were 1,032 participants in the schemes during 2019 and 49 supervisors employed throughout the Gaeltacht.

Strategy 3: Ending the derogation on the use of the Irish language in the EU

Continue to work with our partners in the EU with a view to ending the derogation on the use of the Irish language in the EU by 2022

Language Schemes

During 2019, a total of 24 language schemes were confirmed, including 6 inaugural, 6 second schemes, 8 third schemes and 4 fourth. By the end of the year, there were 132 schemes in force. In addition, active discussion was taking place with 124 public bodies to agree language schemes with them. All schemes are available on the website of An Coimisinéir Teanga at www.coimisineir.ie. Each scheme remains in force for a period of three years or until a new scheme is agreed between the public body concerned and the Minister, whichever is later.

It is worth noting that the number of public bodies that were involved under the Official Languages Act has been significantly reduced as a result of the rationalisation and streamlining of State public bodies in recent years. These changes/refinements have been included in the review of the First Schedule of the Act which has recently been completed and is awaiting final formal approval.

Review of the Official Languages Act

The primary objective of the Official Languages Act 2003 is to ensure the improved provision of public services through the Irish language. Following a comprehensive review and consultation period with key stakeholders, significant progress was made on the review of the Official Languages Act to provide for amendments to the Act. Heads of a revised Bill were submitted to Government on 29th May 2017. Government approval was received to proceed with the drafting of the Bill.

Pre-legislative scrutiny by the relevant Oireachtas Committee was completed in 2018, and drafting work on the Bill in conjunction with the Office of the Attorney General continued through 2019. The draft Bill was considered and approved by Cabinet in December 2019.

Strategy 4: Investing in infrastructure and services for our island communities

Continue to support viable communities on our offshore islands through investment in life-line transport services and in community, enterprise and marine infrastructure

The Department continued to support communities on the offshore islands through investment in life-line transport services and in island and island-related infrastructure. In 2019 the Department subsidised 26 separate routes for Air, Ferry and Cargo services to the islands of the state.

In 2019, 40,319 individual trips were undertaken by ferries subsidised by the Department, carrying 491,207 passengers between the off shore islands and the mainland. A total of 5,920 individual flights, carrying 29,513 passengers, were completed on the air service between the Aran Islands and Aerfort Chonamara. The subsidised helicopter service for Tory Island carried 533 passengers over a period of 21 days during the winter season.

The following table outlines the programme of contracts renewals for transport services subsidised by the Department as of end 2019, and the renewals programme for 2020.

Service	2019	Term
Inishbofin Ferry Service		01/01/2020 – 31/12/2025
Cléire Ferry Serivce		01/02/2019 – 31/01/2024
Árainn Mhór - Ferry		01/09/2019 – 31/08/2024
Tory Helicopter Service		11/10/2019 – 10/04/2020
Aran Islands Air Service		01/10/2019 – 01/04/2020
Aerodrome Management		01/10/2019- 30/09/2020
Clare Island Ferry		01/02/2019 – 31/04/2024
Dursey Island Cargo Service		01/09/2019– 31/08/2021
Whiddy Island Cargo Service		01/03/2019 - 28/02/2021

Service	2020	Term
Aerfort Chonamara		10/03/2020 – 30/09/2020
Inis Bigil Ferry		01/04/2020 - 31/03/2025
Inis Fada Ferry (Long Island)		01/04/2020 – 31/03/2025
Seirbhís Aeir go hÁrainn		01/04/2020 – 31/03/2021
Tory Helicopter Service		11/10/2020 – 10/04/2021
Bere Island Cargo		01/05/2020 – 30/04/2022
Mayo: Inis Láidhra, Clainis & Colaínn Mhór Cargo		01/05/2020 - 30/04/2022
Tory Island Cargo Service		01/06/2020- 31/05/2022
Aerodrome Management Aran Islands & Clifden & Inishboffin		01/10/2020 -30/09/2024
Whiddy Island Ferry Service		01/11/2020 – 31/10/2025

Throughout 2019, the Department continued to support a number of individual initiatives such as the delivery of a BA Degree in Visual Arts in conjunction with Dublin Institute of Technology on Sherkin Island, County Cork.

Islands Policy

An interdepartmental committee for island development was established by the Minister of State to inform the process of developing a new Cross-Government policy. The previous Islands policy was published in 1996. A number of policies had already been developed by individual Departments to support island communities. The aim of the new Islands policy and subsequent action plan is to draw these ad-hoc policies together, and to develop one over-arching all-of-Government policy to support and develop our island communities.

The committee met twice in 2019, and the relevant Government Departments submitted details of their current island policies and schemes to the Department for incorporation into a consultation paper. The consultation paper which informs the public consultation phase was launched on Sherkin in November 2019 by Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney T.D.

Capital Programme

Four projects under the Islands Programme have been included in the National Development Plan, Project Ireland 2040, – pier development at Inis Oírr, Inis Meáin and Machaire Rabhartaigh and the procurement of a new passenger ferry vessel for Toraigh, County Donegal. These projects, although at different stages in their evolution, continued to be progressed in 2019. The 2019 capital budget for the offshore islands also allowed the Department to co-fund a programme of works on the offshore islands,. An overall grant of €753,350 was allocated under the Departments minor works programme for the provision of road repairs and upkeep of piers used to access the islands. These works will be carried out in 2020 in conjunction with the relevant local authorities .

Additionally, the Department acquired Connemara Airport on behalf of the State at a cost of €2.75m in December 2019. Funding for this purchase was provided from the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht's budget allocation and means that all four airports on which the Aran Islands air service depend are in state ownership.

Irish Language Support Schemes

Funding continued to be provided under the Irish Language Support Schemes to a broad range of Irish language organisations and initiatives. Expenditure of €4.231m was incurred. This included:

- Current and capital grants paid to various Irish language organisations operating outside the Gaeltacht, for example, Gaillimh le Gaeilge, Gnó Mhaigh Eo, Gael Taca, Taibhdhearc na Gaillimhe, and An Cumann Scoildrámaíochta.
- Projects supported in the digital humanities and terminology sectors, such as [Dúchas.ie](#), [logainm.ie](#) and [abair.ie](#), in addition to the LEX project which provides Irish language terminology for the EU.
- Teaching of Irish in 44 international universities, including 13 universities under the auspices of the Fulbright Commission and 8 under the auspices of the Ireland Canada University Foundation;
- Support for twelve 3rd level courses in Ireland under the Advanced Irish Language Skills Initiative;
- Support for projects in the business and arts sectors;
- Capital projects at Gaelphobal Thamhlachta in Dublin, Conradh na Gaeilge, 6 Sráid Fhearchair, Baile Átha Cliath 2, and Clár TechSpace project (to provide funding to schools/youth centres to allow them to purchase Digital Media equipment to set up Clár TechSpace).

Projects were advanced to develop the Irish language in technology, machine translation technology, an online degree in Irish and in Irish traditional culture, Clár TechSpace, a new Irish language radio app to bring together all Irish language radio stations, a Digital Plan for the Irish language, *Edcite as Gaeilge* (to create and share a new digital content resource for schools teaching), and RTÉ's Irish Language Action Plan. Funding was also provided to Raidió Rí-Rá, a chart-station for young people that broadcasts in Irish.



Goal E - North-South Co-operation

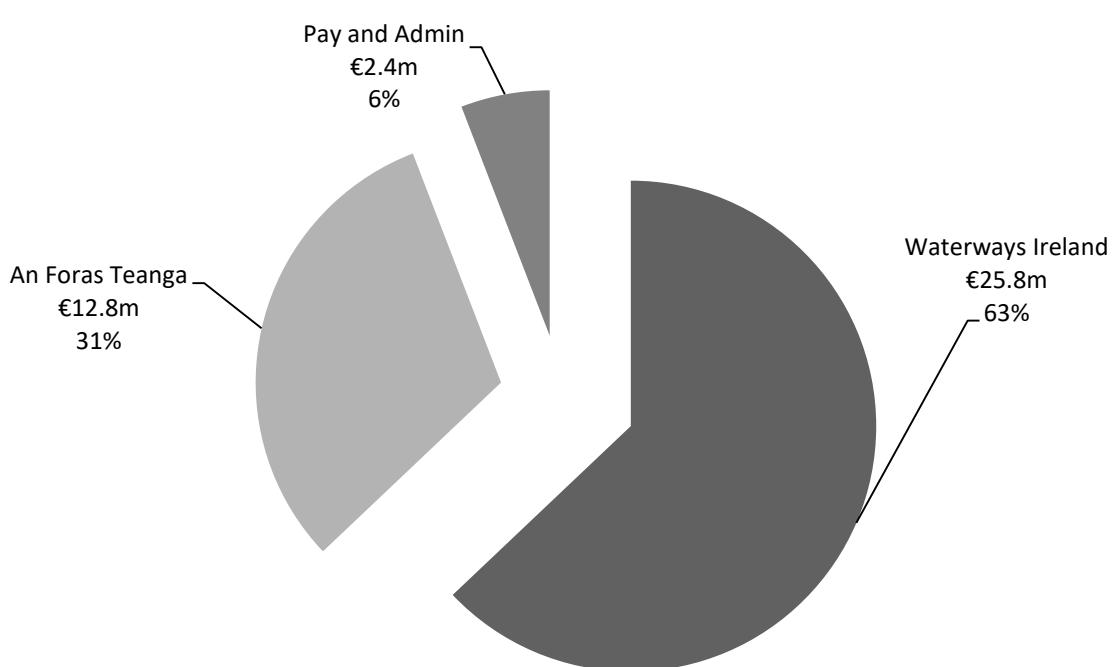
To promote North South co-operation, particularly in the context of An Foras Teanga and Waterways Ireland.

€41.1m of expenditure was incurred to support North-South co-operation efforts in 2019 through the two North-South Implementation Bodies supported by the Department - An Foras Teanga and Waterways Ireland. These bodies also receive funding from the Department for Communities and the Department for Infrastructure in Northern Ireland.

The two bodies received the following from the Department in 2019:

- Waterways Ireland received funding of €25.8m to maintain and invest in our waterways and navigable rivers; and,
- An Foras Teanga received €12.8m to promote the Irish language in every aspect of life throughout the island and to promote greater awareness of Ulster-Scots language and culture.

Expenditure on Goal E by item of expenditure, 2019



Strategy 1: Engaging with the joint funding Departments in Northern Ireland to support the work of the North/South Implementation Bodies

Continued engagement with the joint funding Departments in Northern Ireland to support the work of the two North/South Implementation Bodies, An Foras Teanga and Waterways Ireland

In 2019, engagement continued with the joint funding Departments in Northern Ireland to support the work of the two North/South Implementation Bodies, An Foras Teanga and Waterways Ireland.

Six monitoring meetings were held in respect of Waterways Ireland in 2019. Oversight and governance were also ensured through regular ongoing communication with the Northern Sponsor Department and the Agency and at other meetings.

Four monitoring meetings in respect of An Foras Teanga were held in 2019. Oversight and governance were also ensured through regular ongoing communication with the Northern Sponsor Department and the Agencies and at other meetings.

The Department is committed to co-funding and supporting An Foras Teanga (comprising Foras na Gaeilge and Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch) and to assist this North/South Implementation Body in carrying out its functions in the context of both the Good Friday and St. Andrew's Agreements. An Foras Teanga is accountable to the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) and to the Ministers in the Sponsoring Departments, i.e. this Department and the Department for Communities (DfC) in Northern Ireland.

- Foras na Gaeilge carries out all of the designated responsibilities regarding the Irish language, including facilitating and promoting the development of Irish in the public and private arena.
- Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch has responsibility for the development of the Ulster-Scots language, including the promotion of greater awareness and the use of the language and of Ulster-Scots cultural issues.

Both Foras na Gaeilge and Tha Boord o Ulstèr Scotch have their own boards, whose members together constitute the board of An Foras Teanga.

An Foras Teanga

Foras na Gaeilge

Highlights of the work programme in 2019 included the 20 year anniversary of the founding of Foras na Gaeilge and the threshold of twom unique users being exceeded for the first time ever by foclóir.ie (2.1m unique users in 2019 compared with 1.8m users in 2018).

Some other key achievements included:-

- 738.9k impressions, 162.4k views, 2k new followers agus 115.3k interactions as part of cross-platform video campaign, #ÁrdTeangaFéin. The campaign was nominated for eGov Awards and Irish Content Marketing Awards.
- A cross-platform video campaign, #Foras20, was launched, to commemorate 20 years of the promotion of Irish in partnership with the Irish language lead organisations.
- Comórtas Beo 2019, a contest for newly-composed songs for 11 to 18 year olds (a joint project with Údarás na Gaeltachta), was live streamed online by TG4 from Oireachtas na Samhna in Citywest.
- The Irish language award (sponsored by Foras na Gaeilge) was presented to East Belfast Mission at the Aisling Awards on 29 November.
- The 5 Irish Language Networks (Clondalkin, Loughrea, Ennis, Carntogher and West Belfast) have prepared language plans, and the 3 language plans in the south have been submitted for approval by the Minister for State.
- Gaeltacht Service Towns: a language plan has been prepared for the city of Galway, and submitted for approval by the Minister for State. Work is ongoing on language plans for a further 6 Gaeltacht Service Towns (Letterkenny, Trá Lí, Caisleán an Bharraigh, Dún Garbhán, Cork City and Cathair Saibhín).
- A total of 457 grants were provided during 2019.
- 83 summer camps which gave young people between 3-18 years of age the opportunity to attend sports, drama, dancing, music and filming activities as well as trips.
- 72 activities under the Youth Events Scheme during the school year of 2019/20.
- 46 festivals and 18 drama companies north and south in which the Irish language was promoted.
- 84 primary schools and 70 post-primary schools took part in the Gaelbhratach Irish Flagship scheme during the 2018/19 school year.
- An increase in individual users of the dictionary sites www.focloir.ie and teanglann.ie; Foclóir.ie: 2.1m users in 2019 (12% increase from 2018) and 27m pageviews (21% increase from 2018). Teanglann.ie: 1.8m users in 2019 (30% increase from 2018) and 31m pageviews (14% increase from 2018).
- 10,100 terms were uploaded to www.tearma.ie, including 1,010 new terms. A new version of the website téarma.ie, the National Terminology Database for Irish, was launched in January 2019.
- An Coiste Téarmaíochta organised the international Workshop TOTh (Terminology, Ontology and Theory) in the offices of Foras na Gaeilge, November 2019. Over 40 experts from more than 15 countries attended.
- 5,544 children took part and wrote 3,596 books under the Scríobh Leabhar initiative.
- 108 books published under Scéim na Foilsitheoirachta in 2019.
- Áis: Over 200,000 books distributed to 255 shops on the island of Ireland and 10 shops abroad in 2019.
- An Post Irish Book Awards included a category again for Irish-language Book of the Year which attracted much publicity (funded by Foras na Gaeilge through Loveleabhar Gaeilge).

Ulster-Scots Agency

In 2019 the Agency continued its strong focus on ensuring that learning about Ulster-Scots culture, heritage and language. Language was is . Key achievements in 2019 included:-

- 374 people achieving accredited qualifications, 135 in OCN Lambeg Drumming and 239 in Foundation Certs for Bagpipes, Drumming or Drum Major. A presentation event was held at Parliament Buildings to celebrate the achievements.
- Ulster-Scots Language Week, took place from 25th to 30th November 2019. A total of 25 events took place at venues around Ulster.
- Developed an adult learning programme (2 courses) on aspects so Ulster-Scots culture.
- During the year the Agency developed content and took part in a 8 national and international awareness days including Remembrance Sunday & St Andrew's Day.
- Ulster-Scots delivered 38 outreach events across Northern Ireland and the counties of Cavan and Monaghan.
- Community outreach included 24 summer schools, 8 community festivals, training programmes, information workshops for 162 groups, 20 talks and 20 exhibitions.
- Music and Dance tuition in 70 schools in addition to servicing 32 schools in the flagship programme and delivering 30 afterschools clubs.
- Developed 6 joint events with USA partners including a joint course online with the Maine Ulster-Scots Project.

Funding is provided to An Foras Teanga from this Department and Department for Communities in Northern Ireland in accordance with budgets approved by the NSMC. More detailed information is available on the websites www.forasnagaeilge.ie (Foras na Gaeilge) and www.ulsterscotsagency.com (Tha Boord o Ulstèr Scotch).

Strategy 2: Investing in critical waterways infrastructure

Working with Waterways Ireland to advance its investment programme in critical waterways infrastructure

This Department, together with the Department for Infrastructure in Northern Ireland and the NSMC supports and funds Waterways Ireland in the management, maintenance, development and restoration of the inland waterways.

In 2019, the Department provided funding to Waterways Ireland amounting to €25.842m. 96% of navigable water was open during the period January to December 2019. Increased levels of activity of all types was observed across the waterways, On the Erne navigation 443 new boats were registered (Total registered boats on the Erne on 31 December 2019 was 6869) and on the Shannon navigation 477 new registrations occurred (Total registered boats on Shannon Navigation on 31 December 2019 was 8,624).

The main outputs achieved during the year included the following:

Restoration & repair of Meelick Weir

Work commenced at Meelick Weir during 2019. The works involve the restoration of the weir, its walkway and the tilting weir boards along with the other critical infrastructure requirements (replacement of lock gates, jetty replacement, embankment works and bridge strengthening). The new tilting weir system will be a significant improvement in health and safety for employees managing water levels on site. The project will be completed in mid-2020.

Grand Canal Greenway

Waterways Ireland continued its work with Offaly County Council, Kildare County Council, South Dublin Council and Dublin City Council to develop the Grand Canal towpath from Grand Canal Dock to Shannon Harbour in Co Offaly as a walking and cycling route for recreational, tourism and commuter purposes.

Royal Canal Greenway

In 2019 the longest off-road cycleway opened along the Royal Canal from Maynooth to Clondara.

Works on the “Royal Canal Greenway” between Maynooth and Richmond Harbour / Longford Town were completed. The opening of the Greenway in 2020 will provide a long-distance trail, suitable for both walkers and cyclist

Ulster Canal Greenway

As lead partner, Waterways Ireland is developing the 22km Greenway along the route of the Ulster Canal from Smithborough, Co. Monaghan to Middletown, Co. Armagh.

In 2019, Consultants were appointed for Phase 2 of the Ulster Canal Greenway. This project will see the existing Monaghan Town Greenway extended west to Smithborough and east to Middletown, Co. Armagh. A spur of the Greenway is also proposed along the route of the Monaghan Town Bypass. This 22km project will follow the route of the Ulster Canal wherever possible.

Tullamore Harbour

Working with Offaly County Council Waterways Ireland is actively seeking to redevelop the harbour and branch line in Tullamore into a focal point on the Grand Canal for recreational users and a new water quarter in the centre of Tullamore with a mix of business, residential and recreational amenities. Waterways Ireland has identified a new depot site 1.5km from Tullamore and work to develop this continued in 2019.

Barrow Blueway

An Bord Pleanála planning approval was granted to develop the Barrow Canal towpath as a Blueway from Lowtown to Horse Bridge in Athy in March 2019 (46km distance).

The economic benefit of the towpath development has been estimated at €2.5m per annum from tourism and recreational usage. The project is expected to create approximately 90 jobs during construction phase and c. 130 direct and indirect jobs in tourism recreation and hospitality sectors.

Kildare County Council in partnership with Laois County Council and Waterways Ireland made a successful application under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund with 75% Funding was awarded under the Fund in October 2019.

A Development Steering Committee was formed December 2019 and detailed analysis and design of route and infrastructure will be undertaken between January and June 2020.

Waterways Ireland Events & Marketing

The Bram Stoker event in October 2019 lit up the Grand Canal Dock and attracted approximately 20,000 to the Dock.

Waterways Ireland signed a strategic partnership with Fáilte Ireland in 2019 and significant progress was achieved in relation to the Shannon Master Plan.

Marketing promotion by Waterways Ireland was accentuated by a high level of positive media coverage including 5 days of filming by RTE's Nationwide which highlighted the Shannon Erne and the Shannon Blueway attracting 500,000 viewers.

In September 2019, the Heritage Stories from Waterways series became a finalist in the National eGovernment Awards and European Heritage Motion Awards which is the international competition to highlight multimedia use at cultural heritage in Europe.

Strategy 3: Pursuing North-South co-operation

Pursuing opportunities with partners in Northern Ireland to enhance co-operation across other areas within our remit, including arts, culture, heritage, commemorations and rural affairs

Irish Walled Towns Network

The Irish Walled Towns Network (IWTN) was formed by the Heritage Council in 2005 to help the walled towns of Ireland become better places in which to live, work and visit. The island of Ireland has 56 'proven' walled towns, 29 of which have joined the IWTN. The role of the network is to unite and co-ordinate the efforts of local authorities involved in the management, conservation and enhancement of

historic walled towns in Ireland, both north and south, helping to make Ireland's walled towns become great places in which to live, work and visit.

Guidance and assistance is provided to member towns by providing Heritage Council grants for town wall conservation, community festivals and heritage interpretation. Training is delivered to community groups on how best to use their town's heritage for the benefit of those who live there and we regularly research and publish user-friendly advisory documents.

In 2019, interpretive projects and festivals were grant aided in Derry and Carrickfergus. These are the two member towns in Northern Ireland.

As a result of Heritage Council funding, Derry City and Strabane District Council (DCSDC) procured specialists to undertake a conservation study on the cannon on the Derry Walls. Arising from this an exhibition and an accompanying information booklet about the cannon on the Derry Walls were produced. The exhibition was displayed in the Tower Museum and launched during Heritage Week. A promotional and educational video about the cannon was also produced focusing on their origins, their purpose and their future role.

Support was also provided to enable Derry Walls Day 2019 which took place on Saturday 14 and Sunday 15 September, which included a lecture, mapping exercise, pop-up museum and treasure hunt.

Grant aid support in 2019 was also provided to Carrickfergus through Mid and East Antrim Borough Council to stage an exhibition and related events. The exhibition was launched on 12 September 2019, officially opened by the Mayor of Mid and East Antrim Borough Council.

The IWTN Management Committee has a representative from Carrickfergus as well as a representative from the Northern Ireland Department for Communities, Historic Environment Division.

Museum Standards Programme for Ireland

The Museum Standards Programme for Ireland (MSPI) was established by the Heritage Council in 2007 to benchmark and promote professional standards in the care of collections and to recognise through accreditation the achievement of those standards within the Irish museum sector. It is the only museum programme in Ireland and has about 60 participating institutions across the island of Ireland.

There is one participant in Northern Ireland - The Museum of Free Derry, which is also participating in the UK's Museum Accreditation Scheme. The Museum of Free Derry, owned by the Bloody Sunday Trust, joined the Programme in 2008. It was awarded an Interim Accreditation Certificate at a ceremony in Dublin on 29 June 2011.

The museum closed for an extension and refurbishment improving exhibition space and storage facilities for a number of years. It was granted deferrals to submit applications for Full Accreditation by the Heritage Council during this time and in July 2019 was awarded Interim Accreditation by the Heritage Council. The Museum of Free Derry is now actively working to submit an application for Full Accreditation this September if circumstances allow.

Corporate Matters

Human Resources

The headcount in the Department was 688 at the end of 2019, an increase of 45 (7%). New appointments were made following a prioritisation exercise based on the strategic workforce planning process.

The Civil Service Renewal team provided oversight to the creation of a number of in-house working groups to drive forward areas for improvement which had been identified through the employee engagement survey and the ensuing town hall meetings. Areas covered included Internal Communications, Employee recognition, Staff suggestion scheme, Mobility, Diversity and Inclusion and a number of papers were brought forward to management board for discussion and review. Work is continuing in these areas.

The Mentoring pilot closed out during the year with a very successful event highlighting some of the key learnings from the 51 pairings who participated in the scheme.

There was an increased focus on the staff network groups and inaugural meetings of the Industrial and EO network groups took place during the year.

The Department had success in the Civil Service Excellence in Innovation Awards with a win in the Excellence in Culture, Values and Diversity category and as part of a joint entry in the Research, Analytics and Insight category.

Training and Development of staff was supported through a range of activities including formal training courses, specific health and safety courses and talent development programmes. A new Learning Management System was introduced during the year which is expected to improve the delivery of OneLearning courses, particularly to those staff based in regional locations.

Information Technology

The ICT Unit is responsible for the management and provision of ICT support services for the Department's Culture, Gaeltacht, Heritage and Corporate Affairs Divisions.

The Unit undertook a significant project to migrate the Heritage Division's ICT facilities, user accounts, email, data and sites onto the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht ICT network. This work has seen the unit's user base increase from approximately 300 end users to 700 end users; with the number of supported sites increasing from 6 sites to over 50.

The year also saw the introduction of further build-to-share systems; customised remote access facilities for the Heritage Division; the rollout of approximately 400 pcs; the rollout of approximately 100 laptops to support a more integrated IT function across the Department; the creation of a new dedicated domain with underlying architecture whilst also continuing to provide support for the existing sites and increasing user base.

Evaluation Unit

The Department is committed to fostering a culture of evidence-based decision and policy making, both in the Department and our State Agencies. To that end the Evaluation Unit completed three spending review papers during 2019 and made recommendations to the relevant business unit and state agency based on the findings of the reviews. The reviews, which were published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform as part of the annual IGEES Spending Review Cycle, included;

- A review of the Implementation of the recommendations of the Heritage Council review;
- A review of the ACCESS (Arts and Culture Capital Enhancement Support Scheme) grants scheme;
- A post project review of the Pálás cinema project.

The Evaluation Unit also provided a comprehensive advisory service for all staff to ensure grants and projects were delivered in accordance with best practice.

Finance Unit

The Finance Unit supports Divisions in carrying out their day-to-day financial activities in an appropriate and efficient manner ensuring an effective system of internal financial control is maintained and operated by the Department. The Finance unit is also responsible for Estimates preparation and co-ordination for the Department's Vote having regard to resource allocation priorities. This includes the financial management of expenditure and receipts for the Department as well as regular reporting both internally and externally. The Finance Unit prepares the annual Appropriation Account as well as briefings in respect of various Oireachtas appearances. The Finance unit also provides a Procurement oversight function for the Department.

Corporate Governance & Services

The Department is committed to providing a high-quality, efficient and effective service to its customers. The Department's Customer Service Action Plan and Customer Service Charter are available on the Department's website.

Freedom of Information and Access to Information on the Environment

Between 1st January 2019 and 31st December 2019, the Department received 225 requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2014. Of the 225 requests, 53 were granted in full, 60 were part-granted, and 45 were refused. A total of 38 applications were withdrawn or handled outside of the FOI Act.

Between 1st January 2019 and 31st December 2019, the Department received 34 requests under the Access to Information on the Environment Regulations. Of the 34 requests, 12 were granted in full, 13 were part-granted, and 5 were refused. A total of 2 applications were withdrawn or handled outside of AIE regulations while 2 cases were still active at year end.”

COMMUNICATIONS

In line with the Government strategy to “*Significantly improve communications and engagement with the public*” (Our Public Service 2020: Action 4), the Department appointed an experienced Head of Communications in 2019, in line with several other Government Departments. A new communications strategy is underway, to ensure that members of the public, and interested stakeholders, are kept engaged with developments in the Department’s strategic priorities, as set out in its Statement of Strategy.

Press Office

Some 256 Press Releases and Department Statements were issued by the Press Office during the year. Of these, 81% were issued simultaneously in Irish and in English.

A new focus was put on social media during 2019. The Department’s Twitter account was reinvigorated, with new and engaging content and material showing the impact and the purpose of the Department’s many projects and programmes all over Ireland. Public interaction grew as a result, with followers up by 48% to 8,625 over the year.

In May 2019, the Department launched new accounts on Instagram and Facebook, showcasing work of the Department, and enabling engagement with and feedback from the public. These platforms grew strongly over the year to 1,657 and 2,995 followers respectively by year end.

Internal Communications

Over 2019, the Press Office team worked closely with colleagues in Line Divisions to support effective internal and external communications, and will continue to strengthen Departmental-wide capacity in this area.

A cross-functional group on Internal Communications, formed under the Civil Service Renewal programme, in response to matters raised in the Civil Service Employee Engagement Survey (2017), produced a draft Internal Communications Policy, and supporting Action Plans, for the Department.

In Q4, the Department launched its new staff intranet (*Roinnfo*), with the assistance of the Office of Government Chief Information Officer. This intranet is a key tool, along with Grade Networks, staff newsletters and line management contacts, in supporting Departmental functions and maximising internal communications, knowledge-sharing and team spirit.



Appendix 1: Programme for a Partnership Government 2016

Commitments relating to the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

The commitments referred to here, in respect of the Programme for a partnership Government 2016, are those for which the Department has lead responsibility.

Arts, Culture & Heritage

- Continuation of the current process involving all stakeholders including the NPWS, Government-appointed scientists and the TCCA. The Government will do all in its power to facilitate and expedite this process, including providing additional resources, to provide impacted turf cutters with an agreed and reasonable alternative, with the aim of making substantial progress within the lifetime of this Government.
- Publish new legislation to de-designate 46 NHAs within the first 100 days of Government.
- Review the timetable for the implementation of actions relating to NHAs in consultation with the EU.
- Build on the progress already made on SAC's and will continue working to expedite the relocation process.
- Expand the Historic Towns Initiative to include more towns.
- Support the traditional heritage of literature, music, song and dance.
- Continue to commemorate the most significant events in the history of this State, ensuring that these commemorations are inclusive, and enhance our understanding of our shared history, particularly among children and young people, so that they have a meaningful and lasting impact.
- Develop and publish an updated National Heritage Plan that sets out policies for the protection and promotion of our built and natural heritage and responds to challenges within the heritage sector.
- Implement the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Heritage so that Ireland's unique cultural heritage assets, such as hurling, uilleann piping and the Folklore Collection in UCD, are given UNESCO recognition and status.
- Work to progressively increase funding to the arts, including the Arts Council and the Irish Film Board, as the economy continues to improve.
- Implement the Arts in Education Charter, which provides an unprecedented opportunity for children and young people to engage in a proactive and meaningful way with arts in education in Ireland.
- Encourage each local authority to strengthen the role of arts, heritage and architectural conservation officers. We will establish stronger links between arts, heritage and architectural conservation officers, the OPW, Fáilte Ireland, the Arts Council, as well as with Local Enterprise Offices, to develop and promote opportunities for arts and cultural tourism.
- Boost supports to regional museums and facilitate increased loans between our National Cultural Institutions and our network of regional museums.
- Work with the Irish Film Board/Screen Ireland to ensure that Ireland is maximised as a location for international film production
- Prioritise the publication of Culture 2025, the first national cultural policy. It will consider a range of important issues including: supporting artists and creative workers, improving access to culture, breaking down barriers in areas of social exclusion and disadvantage, and

how culture is enriched by greater cultural diversity. The publication of Culture 2025 follows a widespread consultation process with relevant stakeholders.

- Introduce a new small grants scheme to provide essential upgrades to existing regional arts and cultural centres around the country, including regional theatres.
- Support a built heritage investment scheme on an annual basis to support the conservation or heritage structures and the regeneration of urban and rural areas.
- Further encourage strong, mutually beneficial links between the business community and arts organisations. This approach will be based on helping arts organisations to capitalise on sponsorship opportunities, and develop business partnerships and fundraising skills.
- Implement the 20-Year Strategy for the Irish language, increase the number of people using Irish in their daily lives and ensure that Irish becomes a more visible language in today's society, both as a spoken language and also in areas such as signage and literature.
- Increase investment in the Irish language.
- Focus on job creation in the Gaeltacht, through Údarás na Gaeltachta.
- Encourage the attendance by children in Irish-medium pre-schools or naónraí in Gaeltacht areas.
- Recognise the importance of the status of Irish as a full working language of the EU institutions and work towards ending the derogation, as circumstances allow.

An Ghaeilge

The Irish language is of crucial importance to our heritage and culture. The new Government needs to systematically implement the 20-Year Strategy for the Irish language, increase the number of people using Irish in their daily lives and ensure that Irish becomes a more visible language in today's society, both as a spoken language and also in areas such as signage and literature.

Among other measures, we will:

- Focus on job creation in the Gaeltacht, through Údarás na Gaeltachta
- Encourage the attendance by children in Irish-medium pre-schools or naónraí in Gaeltacht areas
- Recognise the importance of the status of Irish as a full working language of the EU institutions and work towards ending the derogation, as circumstances allow
- Increase investment in the Irish language.

We will take full advantage of the favourable treatment of capital investment under the fiscal rules to fund additional regional capital investment over the 5-year period 2017-21 including:

- An extra €300m in capital funding between Enterprise Ireland and Údarás na Gaeltachta to allow them to provide additional support to Irish-owned enterprises. This extra funding will give Local Enterprise Offices and incubation centres additional resources to help support start-ups and small businesses across the country

North/South Cooperation

North/South Ministerial Council.

We will continue to advance North South cooperation, particularly through cross-border bodies and the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) and harness the potential of the Stormont House Agreement to develop new areas of cooperation in areas such as trade, health, tourism, sport and security.

Appendix 2: 2019 Expenditure

SUBHEAD	HEADING	OUTTURN
	ADMINISTRATION	€'000
X.1	Salaries, Wages and Allowances	34,436
X.2	Travel and Subsistence	1,239
X.3	Training and Development and Incidental Expenses	969
X.4	Postal and Telecommunications Services	446
X.5	Office Equipment and External IT Services	2,096
X.6	Office Premises Expenses	831
X.7	Consultancy Services and Value for Money and Policy Reviews	0
	TOTAL	40,017
	CULTURE	
A.1	Administration – Pay	6,894
A.2	Administration – Non-Pay	1,605
A.3	Payments to match resources generated by the National Archives	40
A.4	General Expenses of the National Archives and National Archives Advisory Council	1,138
A.5	General Expenses of the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Chester Beatty Library, National Concert Hall and the Crawford Gallery	13,373
A.6	Regional Museums, Galleries, Cultural Centres and Projects	12,455
A.7	Cultural Infrastructure and Development	8,400
A.8	Culture Ireland	4,942
A.9*	An Chomhairle Ealaíon	75,002
A.10	General Expenses of the National Museum of Ireland	14,109
A.11	General Expenses of the National Library of Ireland	7,825
A.12	Fís Éireann / Screen Ireland	20,040
A.13	General Expenses of the National Gallery of Ireland	10,547
A.14	European City of Culture	6,000
A.15	Decade of Centenaries 1912-1922	1,100
A.16	Cork Event Centre	0
	TOTAL	183,470

	HERITAGE	
B.1	Administration – Pay	22,687
B.2	Administration – Non-Pay	1,732
B.3*	Grant for An Chomhairle Oidreachta (Heritage Council)	6,558
B.4	Built Heritage	3,863
B.5	Natural Heritage (National Parks and Wildlife Service)	13,498
B.6	Irish Heritage Trust	649
B.7	Built Heritage Investment Scheme	2,388
B.8	Peatlands Restoration	4,038
	TOTAL	55,413
	GAELTACHT	
C.1	Administration – Pay	3,484
C.2	Administration – Non-Pay	1,191
C.3	Gaeltacht Support Schemes	8,547
C.4*	Irish Language Support Schemes	5,148
C.5	An Coimisinéir Teanga	808
C.6	Údarás na Gaeltachta – Administration	9,442
C.7	Údarás na Gaeltachta – Current Programme Expenditure	3,850
C.8	Údarás na Gaeltachta – Grants for Projects and Capital Expenditure on Premises	9,700
C.9	Islands	10,566
C.10	20 Year Strategy for the Irish Language - 2010-2030	2,625
	TOTAL	55,361
	NORTH/SOUTH CO-OPERATION	
D.1	Administration – Pay	1,371
D.2	Administration – Non-Pay	1,053
D.3	An Foras Teanga	12,833
D.4	Waterways Ireland	25,842
	TOTAL	41,099
GROSS EXPENDITURE TOTAL		335,343
APPROPRIATIONS-IN-AID		5,046
NET EXPENDITURE TOTAL		330,297
(*part funded by the National Lottery)		

Appendix 3: Gender Balance Statement for State Boards

A total of 16 appointments were made across the 14 State Boards operating under the aegis of the Department in 2019 - 56% female and 44% male. One chairperson (male) was appointed. The average gender balance in the serving membership of these State Boards as of 31 December 2019 was 51% male and 49% female while no boards had either an all-male or an all-female membership. Overall, 10 (71%) of the 14 boards have met the Government target of 40% representation of each gender in the serving membership of each State Board. The remaining four boards are:

- Foras na Gaeilge 33% male and 67% female;
- Screen Ireland 29% male and 71% female;
- Údarás na Gaeltachta 67% male and 33% female;
- Ulster-Scots Agency 75% male and 25% female.

The following measures are planned to promote appropriate gender balance on these Boards:

1. Internal procedures for appointments to State Boards updated to include gender balance and nominations from external bodies: 'The Chair and Line Divisions should engage with external nominating bodies on the objective of promoting better gender balance in nominations to State Boards';
2. Gender balance is a key consideration in respect of filling the pending vacancies via the PAS process;
3. A review is currently underway in respect of the process for the filling vacancies on the Boards of Foras na Gaeilge and the Ulster-Scots Agency (North South Bodies), which is pending a meeting of the North South Ministerial Council.

Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht State Board Membership at 31 December 2019

State Board	No. Positions	Female Board members	Male Board members	Total	Female %	Male %	Current Vacancies
Arts Council	13	6	7	13	46%	54%	0
Crawford Art Gallery	12	8	4	12	67%	33%	0
Foras na Gaeilge ²	16	4	4	8	50%	50%	8
Heritage Council ³	11	6	5	11	55%	45%	0
Irish Manuscripts Commission	20	8	12	20	40%	60%	0
Irish Museum of Modern Art ¹	12	5	6	11	45%	55%	1
National Archives Advisory Council	12	5	7	12	42%	58%	0
National Concert Hall ¹	9	4	4	8	50%	50%	1
National Gallery of Ireland	17	8	9	17	47%	53%	0
National Library of Ireland	12	6	6	12	50%	50%	0
National Museum of Ireland ¹	16	9	5	14	64%	36%	2
Screen Ireland ³	7	5	2	7	71%	29%	0
Údarás Na Gaeltachta	12	4	8	12	33%	67%	0
Ulster Scots Agency ²	8	1	3	4	25%	75%	4
Totals	177	79	82	161	49%	51%	16

1. PAS Process commenced to fill existing vacancies;

2. Appointments to boards of North/South bodies are made by the North-South Ministerial Council arising from nominations on a 50:50 basis by each jurisdiction. Decision re process to fill existing vacancies under review & pending a meeting of the North South Ministerial Council;

3. PAS process commenced in respect of pending vacancies.