



## Laois Heritage Office Newsletter

March 2024

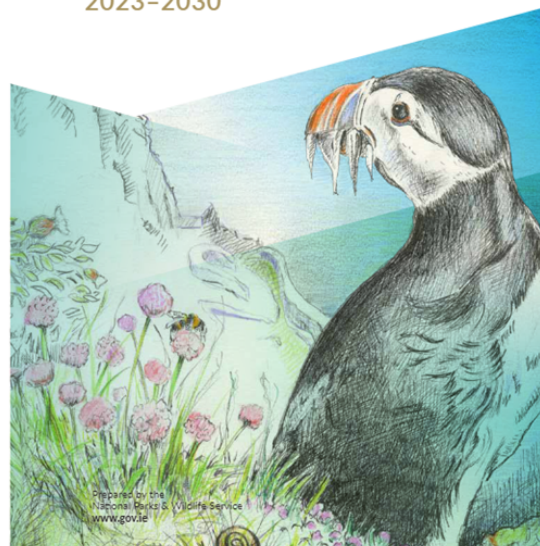
Welcome to the Laois Heritage Office Newsletter – providing updates on heritage-related news, events and activities in Laois.

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### Heritage News



### Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023–2030



#### Ireland's 4th Biodiversity Action Plan Launched

On 25th January Minister of State for Nature, Heritage and Electoral Reform, Malcolm Noonan launched Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP).

This new NBAP is the first to be published under the Wildlife Amendment Act 2023, with legal requirements for public bodies. Among the 194 actions is a commitment to develop a national Nature Restoration Plan.

[VIEW PLAN](#)

#### New Heritage Specialists for Heritage in Schools

The Heritage Council has welcomed 49 new Heritage Specialists to the existing Heritage in Schools panel for the next four-year term (2024-2027).

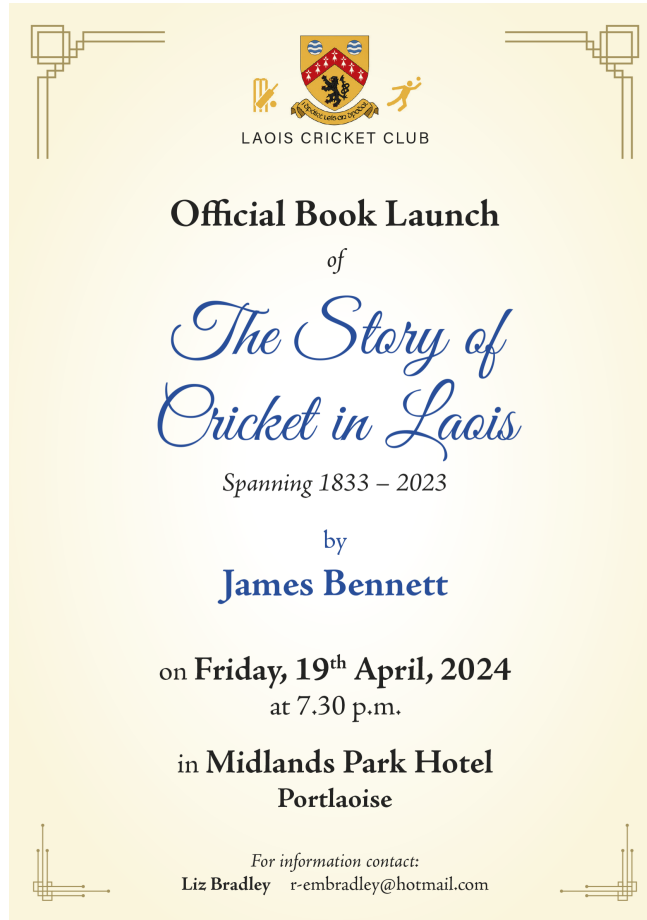
The new panelists, including 9 fluent Irish speakers, will join with the existing members to create a panel of approximately 150 highly skilled professionals covering a very diverse range of topics. If you are interested in a visit from one of these Heritage Specialists, click below for more details.

## HERITAGE SPECIALISTS

### Upcoming Heritage Events

#### **Book Launch: The Story of Cricket in Laois**

This book launch is taking place on Friday 19th April at the Midlands Park Hotel, Portlaoise. It is a rare opportunity to learn about the rich heritage of cricket in Ireland, a topic often overlooked. Details below.



**Official Book Launch**  
of  
*The Story of Cricket in Laois*  
Spanning 1833 – 2023  
by  
**James Bennett**  
on **Friday, 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2024**  
at 7.30 p.m.  
in **Midlands Park Hotel**  
**Portlaoise**  
For information contact:  
**Liz Bradley** [r-embradley@hotmail.com](mailto:r-embradley@hotmail.com)



#### **Festival of Gardens & Nature**

Taking place in Ballintubbert Gardens & House, Athy on 20-21st April, this exciting new addition to the calendar in Laois will consist of 'a two-day festival of talks, workshops, organic cooking, garden tours, foraging classes and more. It is all about discovering the latest ideas for creating an ecologically sustainable and beautiful garden'.

[VIEW DETAILS](#)

The graphic features the National Heritage Week logo (three interlocking circles) and the text 'National Heritage Week A Heritage Council programme'. Below this, the text 'Training & Networking Days' is displayed. To the right, three dates and locations are listed: '1st May | Dublin The Dublin Royal Convention Centre', '9th May | Sligo Sligo Park Hotel', and '16th May | Limerick Absolute Hotel'. A small circular inset shows a woman speaking at a podium. At the bottom right, a button says 'Register on heritageweek.ie'.

### Heritage Week Training Events

The Heritage Council will be holding these training events for groups interested in learning more about how to plan and organise National Heritage Week events. There will be a number of talks on the day with support and guidance for those planning Heritage Week events including the use of social media to promote events, ideas for natural heritage events and more.

[VIEW DETAILS](#)

### Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement - 2024 Conference in Portlaoise

It is with great excitement that we can announce The Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement (GSIHS) will hold its annual conference on the theme of settlement in Laois in May this year. The GSIHS are an interdisciplinary group of historians, geographers, archaeologists, as well as interested members of the public, founded in 1969. The conference will take place in Portlaoise over two days with a fascinating schedule of talks planned. All booking information and details of talks can be found on their website below.

[VIEW DETAILS](#)

## Community Corner

### Tonduff Cillín Memorial Project

This project was initiated by the community and is being supported by Laois County Council. The Tonduff Cillín Committee was eager to mark the location of a cillín at Tonduff Cross close to Abbeyleix and to commemorate those buried there.

Cillíní are unconsecrated sites that were used for the burial of unbaptised children in the past. They were often located beside existing cemeteries or at locations with a previous sacred or religious significance. However, the lack of any significant markers as burial sites can lead to cillíní disappearing and being forgotten. The Tonduff Cillín Memorial Project aims to ensure the cillín at Tonduff Cross is commemorated for the future and those buried there remembered.

In addition to the commemorative stone at Tonduff Cross, the community are planning to create a reflection area at the Abbeyleix Heritage House Museum. This will include a reflection seat with a QR code, which will tell visitors the story of the Tonduff Cillín and the story of cillíní in Ireland. The Irish Independent featured a story on the project [HERE](#)



Site of proposed cillin memorial at Tonduff Cross.

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