

Kilkenny County Heritage Strategy, 2026–2030

Submission by The Kilkenny PPN Social Inclusion Working Group

The Kilkenny Public Participation Network (PPN) Social Inclusion Working Group welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the consultation on the Kilkenny County Heritage Strategy 2026-2030.

As a collective of local groups working with marginalised, underrepresented, and diverse communities across Kilkenny, the Social Inclusion Working Group is dedicated to promoting inclusion, equality, and representation in all aspects of community life. Our submission is rooted in the Kilkenny PPN's [Vision for Community Wellbeing](#), with a particular focus on values for equity, social justice, cultural recognition, and community empowerment.

We believe that recognising and preserving the full breadth of Kilkenny's heritage - social, environmental, cultural and economic - must include the voices of all communities, especially those historically excluded. Embedding diversity and inclusion at the heart of heritage efforts is essential to honour our shared past and to foster a stronger, more cohesive future.

Our recommendations reflect the lived experiences and aspirations of diverse communities across the county. We hope this submission will support the development of a Heritage Strategy that is truly inclusive, participative, and forward-looking.

Our Submission

The Kilkenny PPN Social Inclusion Working Group strongly recommends that social groups - including, but not limited to, migrants, immigrants, members of the LGBTQIA+ community, Traveller community, and persons with disabilities - are included in the new Heritage Strategy.

We believe that the legacy and history of diverse communities, must be recognised, celebrated, and preserved, including the intangible heritage (art and culture) that they embody in Ireland.

We recommend that:

- Holistic inclusionary action is embedded as part of the Heritage Strategy development process, ensuring that members of diverse communities are meaningfully included and consulted with as part of the process.
- Where possible, members of the community should be fairly compensated for their time to remove barriers to participation. Without this consideration, it is possible that only the most privileged may be able to afford to contribute.

- Particular attention is paid to the language, documentation, and technology used throughout the strategy development process to ensure that it is both accessible and inclusive.

We emphasise that genuine engagement means consulting directly with community members themselves, not solely through intermediary groups or organisations.

Additionally, we recommend that:

- Future heritage funding, informed by the strategy, explicitly supports intangible heritage and diverse cultural expressions within Kilkenny.
- Data on past Heritage funding related to access and inclusion be made available and transparent.
- A clearer definition of intangible heritage, and how it has been funded, be included in the strategy.

We also encourage that access and inclusion resources be reviewed and updated, and that the Heritage Officer continues to work closely with the Kilkenny PPN and other local groups to engage diverse community voices meaningfully throughout the development and implementation of the strategy.

The Kilkenny PPN Social Inclusion Working Group looks forward to a new, inclusive Heritage Strategy, and we encourage the Kilkenny County Council Heritage and Access Officers to consult with us regularly throughout the process.

This submission has been prepared by:

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Input, support, and approval provided by:

Kilkenny PPN Social Inclusion Working Group, April 2025