



**THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROFESSION IN IRELAND:
A ONE DAY WORKSHOP HOSTED BY THE HERITAGE COUNCIL TO IDENTIFY FUTURE POSSIBILITIES**

Archaeology is a significant element of our heritage. The Heritage Council has a long-standing commitment to the promotion of professional archaeological practices in Ireland. The development of a vibrant and sustainable archaeological profession in Ireland is essential to interpret and communicate the richness of our archaeological record.

Public sector archaeologists, researchers/teachers and commercial archaeological operations are core elements of the archaeological profession and it is imperative to ensure they survive the current economic climate in a progressive and sustainable manner.

The current economic difficulties have had a devastating effect on the archaeological profession. Huge numbers have left the profession due to lack of work. These archaeologists are now unemployed, working or training in different sectors of the labour force or have emigrated. Archaeological firms have either ceased trading or downsized significantly. The public sector, including the universities, has reduced the number of archaeologists greatly with the termination of most temporary contracts. A huge amount of expertise, knowledge and corporate memory is being lost to the profession.

The numbers working in commercial archaeology during the boom years were approximately 1,750. This figure has significantly contracted to the current estimate of 350. In the medium-term, the sustainable number for commercial archaeology is estimated at 500. Unemployment among archaeologists is currently estimated at 80%.

The Heritage Council has consistently encouraged participation in our archaeological heritage. In the current circumstances, the Heritage Council will promote the sustainable development of the archaeological profession in Ireland and accordingly, the Heritage Council will work with the profession to ensure that it meets its current challenges.

We propose to invite members of the Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland (IAI) and other interested archaeologists to develop a process attempting to initiate the revival of the archaeological profession. This process will commence with a meeting at the offices of **the Heritage Council, Áras na hOidhreachta, Church Lane, Kilkenny at 11.00am on Tuesday, 8th of March 2011**. The agenda for the day is outlined but all matters relating to the progression of the process are open to discussion.

Accordingly, the Heritage Council invites you to express your interest in attending the above meeting to **Christena.cryan@heritagecouncil.ie** Places are limited so an early notification will be necessary to ensure a place.

For further information contact:

Ian Doyle, Head of Conservation or Liam Scott, Head of Business at 056 7770777



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The Heritage Council, Áras na hOidhreachta, Church Lane, Kilkenny

11.00am Tuesday, 8th of March 2011

- 11.00am Registration, Tea and Coffee
- 11.20am Introduction
Liam Scott, Head of Business Services, The Heritage Council
Ian Doyle, Head of Conservation, The Heritage Council
- 11.30am The Archaeological Profession in Ireland
Open Forum
Chairperson; Ger Mulvey
- 12.00pm Opportunity in Challenging Times
Brainstorming in Group Setting
Facilitator; Ian Doyle
- 01.00pm Lunch
- 02.00pm Reports to meeting
Group rapporteurs
- 03.00pm Proposals for the future of the process
Facilitator; Liam Scott
- 03.30pm Seminar Close

Places will be limited to a maximum of forty participants.

Lunch shall be provided.

Transport will be available from Kilkenny Railway Station to Áras na hOidhreachta at 10.50am and for the return at 3.30pm. Please indicate if you require this facility.