An Roinn Tithíochta,
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta
Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage

Ms. Brenda Kelly - Assistant Staff Officer,
Kilkenny County Council
Brenda.Kelly@kilkennycoco.ie

17 August 2023

Our Ref: HPLG-MoSN-00457-2023

Dear Ms. Kelly,

On behalf of Mr. Malcolm Noonan, T.D. Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform, I wish to refer to your correspondence in relation to a resolution passed by members of Kilkenny County Council, which was initially sent to the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports and Media, for response.

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage currently provides financial support for the protection of eligible heritage buildings and historic structures through two grant schemes which are, in the main, administered by the local authorities. These are the Historic Structures Fund (HSF) and the Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS).

The HSF is for conservation and enhancement of heritage structures and historic buildings, in both private and public ownership, for the benefit of communities and the public. The BHIS is a scheme for the repair and conservation of structures on the local authority Record of Protected Structures (RPS).

In 2022, Kilkenny County Council was granted funding totalling €125,820.00 under the HSF for four projects: Kells House, Old Ennisnag Bridge, St. Canice's Cathedral and a vernacular structure in Balief, Woodsgift. Under the BHIS 2022, Kilkenny County Council received a total of €151,493.52 for works to 12 projects. With a total of €277,313.52 provided to Kilkenny County Council under these two schemes in 2022, the Department continues to support and encourage the restoration and conservation of Kilkenny's built heritage.

Oifig an Aire Stáit don Oidhreachta agus don Athchóiriú Toghchánach
Office of the Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform

Teach an Chustaim, Baile Átha Cliath, D01 W6X0
Custom House, Dublin, D01 W6X0
T +353 1 888 2425 | MOS@housing.gov.ie
www.housing.gov.ie

Full details of both schemes are available on the Department's website www.gov.ie - Financial Assistance for Architectural Heritage. The deadline for applications for 2023 has closed since January this year.

It is intended to run both schemes again in 2024 and full details will be available on the Department's website later this year. It should be noted that all applications to the Department for either scheme are put forward by Francis Coady, Architectural Conservation Officer within Kilkenny Council.

While this Department does not have a direct role in establishing learning resource centres for traditional building skills, under the Heritage Council's new strategic plan, they have placed traditional skills training as a key priority. The Heritage Council, who are under the aegis of this Department, are currently engaged with the Irish Traditional Skills Initiative.

Additional funding for the conservation and protection of historic buildings is also available through the Historic Towns Initiative (HTI), which is also a joint undertaking by the Department and the Heritage Council. This scheme has been in operation since 2018 and has supported heritage-led regeneration projects in twenty-three towns, including Callan in Co. Kilkenny.

These schemes are administered directly by the Heritage Council who would be able to provide further information regarding future applications.

I hope this information has been of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

D. Mc Donnell

Danielle McDonnell

Private Secretary to Minister Malcolm Noonan T.D.

Office of the Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform

Please note: the Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform is a Designated Public Official under the Regulation of Lobbying Act, 2015 (details available on www.lobbying.ie)