

Seminar On ‘Heritage Gardens And Designed Landscapes’

09/11/07

Speaking at the Seminar held in the Botanic Gardens on ‘Heritage Gardens and Designed Landscapes’ organised by an Taisce, Mr. John Gormley, T.D., Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, today (9 November) referred to his Department’s Survey of ‘Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes’ and also referred to the planned National Landscape Strategy.

The Minister said, *“Our landscapes are the product of the interaction of natural and human forces. Understanding and recognising this valuable asset is the first and most important step in its protection.”* He continued, *“Gardens, which are an important element of that landscape, have been a feature of the Irish countryside for centuries. Our temperate climate is one of the most favourable in the world for gardening.”*

Referring to his Department’s current survey of Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes, Minister Gormley stated *“the objective of this survey is to commence a process of identifying the number of gardens that survive in Ireland and the extent of their survival. The first phase of the survey was published in November 2006 and includes over 6,000 records of historic gardens and designed landscapes in an “on-line” searchable inventory.”* The Minister went on to say, *“work has commenced on fieldwork which is the next phase of this survey. Fieldwork is essential in order to assess the heritage importance of sites.”*

Mr Gormley also referred to the Fáilte Ireland **“Tourism Product Development Strategy 2007-2013”** whereby a sum of €137million is being made available by his colleague, Séamus Brennan, T.D., Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism, under the National Development Plan towards the development of key elements of the tourism product during this period.

Minister Gormley explained that *“Within this funding allocation is a sum of €70 million for upgrading and developing visitor attractions throughout the country. This fund applies also to projects involving the restoration, conservation or appropriate development of Great Gardens of major historic and horticultural merit as significant day visitor attractions.”*

Referring to his recently announced commitment to introduce a National Landscape Strategy, the Minister said *“it was a key aim for me to incorporate in the Programme for Government a commitment to introduce a National Landscape Strategy.”*

The Minister emphasised that the Strategy would involve a strong partnership approach and stakeholders input from an early stage of its development and concluded by saying *“I hope that the outcome of these policies and strategies will result in the preservation of our landscapes for the enjoyment of future generations.”*

Further information:

Failte Ireland Grants: www.failteireland.ie

Gardens Survey: www.buildingsofireland.ie

[Museum of Garden History](#)

Pioneers of American Landscape Design

http://www.tclf.org/pioneers/oral_history.htm

Garden And Forest

<http://www.loc.gov/preserv/prd/gardfor/essays/essaysongf.html>