

Slide 1: Enhancing Biodiversity at Bride Street Church

Speaker Notes:

“Bride Street Church is one of Wexford’s iconic ‘Twin Churches’ and a key site for biodiversity enhancement. This initiative is part of a parish-wide project inspired by Pope Francis’s *Laudato Si’*, aiming to dedicate one-third of church grounds to nature. Our goal is to balance heritage, ecology, and economic realities while creating a greener, more sustainable space.”

SLIDE 2

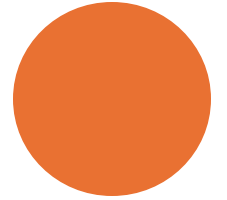
Purpose and Background: Why This Matters

- *Speaker Notes:*
- “The church grounds currently serve as a major car park, generating 60% of parish income, which limits large-scale rewilding. Instead, we propose phased, low-cost measures that respect the site’s protected status.



SLIDE 3

- **Managing Church Grounds Responsibly**
- *Speaker Notes:*
- “We follow four guiding principles: safety, legal compliance, amenity, and nature conservation. These ensure trees and structures are safe, heritage laws are respected, and spaces remain welcoming while supporting biodiversity. One transformative idea is removing the dividing wall with the convent garden, creating a unified landscape for joint management and public access.”



SLIDE 4

- **Tree and Habitat Management**
- *Speaker Notes:*
- “Heritage trees like Holm Oaks and Sycamore require careful monitoring and selective pruning. We recommend planting a Cedar of Lebanon and native Yews as symbols of faith and resilience. Wildlife features such as bird-friendly water troughs and discreet bird and bat boxes will enhance habitat diversity, while retaining the old apple tree for birds.”

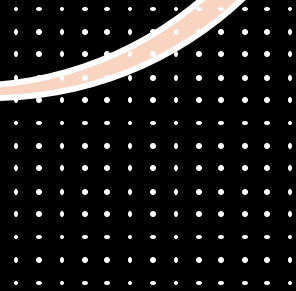


SLIDE 5

Lighting and Planting Strategies

- *Speaker Notes:*
- “Lighting upgrades should follow Dark Sky standards—warm LEDs, downward shading, and motion sensors to protect nocturnal species. Planting native ivy along walls will provide food for pollinators and soften hard surfaces. The pocket forest needs thinning of invasives while retaining native species, and mowing regimes should allow wildflowers to flourish for pollinators.”





SLIDE 6

- **New Plantings and Educational Opportunities**
- *Speaker Notes:*
- “New plantings include native Yews and a wild blueberry patch in collaboration with Georgia Savannah University. Educational features like a climate-history marker and plaques for historic gardens and Quaker heritage will enrich community engagement. These initiatives turn the site into a living classroom for ecology, history, and faith-based stewardship.”

SLIDE 7

- **Key Recommendations and Vision for the Future**
- *Speaker Notes:*
- “Our priorities are clear: integrate the church and convent gardens, protect heritage trees, adopt eco-friendly management, and promote education. Partnerships with the parish, council, and university will ensure long-term success. Ultimately, this project transforms a car-dominated site into a model of faith-driven environmental leadership for Wexford.”

