



03

HOW TO?

Research
Heritage



Supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Hands-On Heritage Project NI is a project that combines traditional heritage engagement and outreach with the introduction of a range of new digital engagement technologies, better connecting people and communities with built heritage.



This is one of ten Heritage: How To? Guides, covering a broad spectrum of ideas in relation to Northern Ireland's historic environment.

Enliven—Enrich—Illuminate
Researching your heritage can be rewarding for yourself and others, enabling you to establish personal connections and interests within the historic environment, in particular a historic building or monument.

It is also extremely valuable in understanding a building’s cultural significance if you are hoping to undertake restoration or conservation works, or research can assist you in making appropriate choices in materials or finishes. Research can be undertaken in a variety of different forms, from archival research to interviews or experimental research. The world around us is continuously changing. Information that may have been once hard to access is becoming more readily available, allowing you to avail of a wealth of information to assist you in whatever route you choose.

This guide focuses on accessing historic sources of information to bring a story to life; however, remember that there are multiple ways of conducting research, and you may want to choose more than one method to give depth to your findings. For example, this could include interviews with previous occupants; or perhaps you would like to experiment with producing a mortar which matches the existing mortar on the building.

There are numerous resources in Northern Ireland for you to consult during your building research. Many of these resources are free but you may need to enroll as a free member to access information. Other sources may require a membership, subscription or fee to access information. Depending on your interest, or extent of research, all or some of the resources in this guide may be of interest to you.

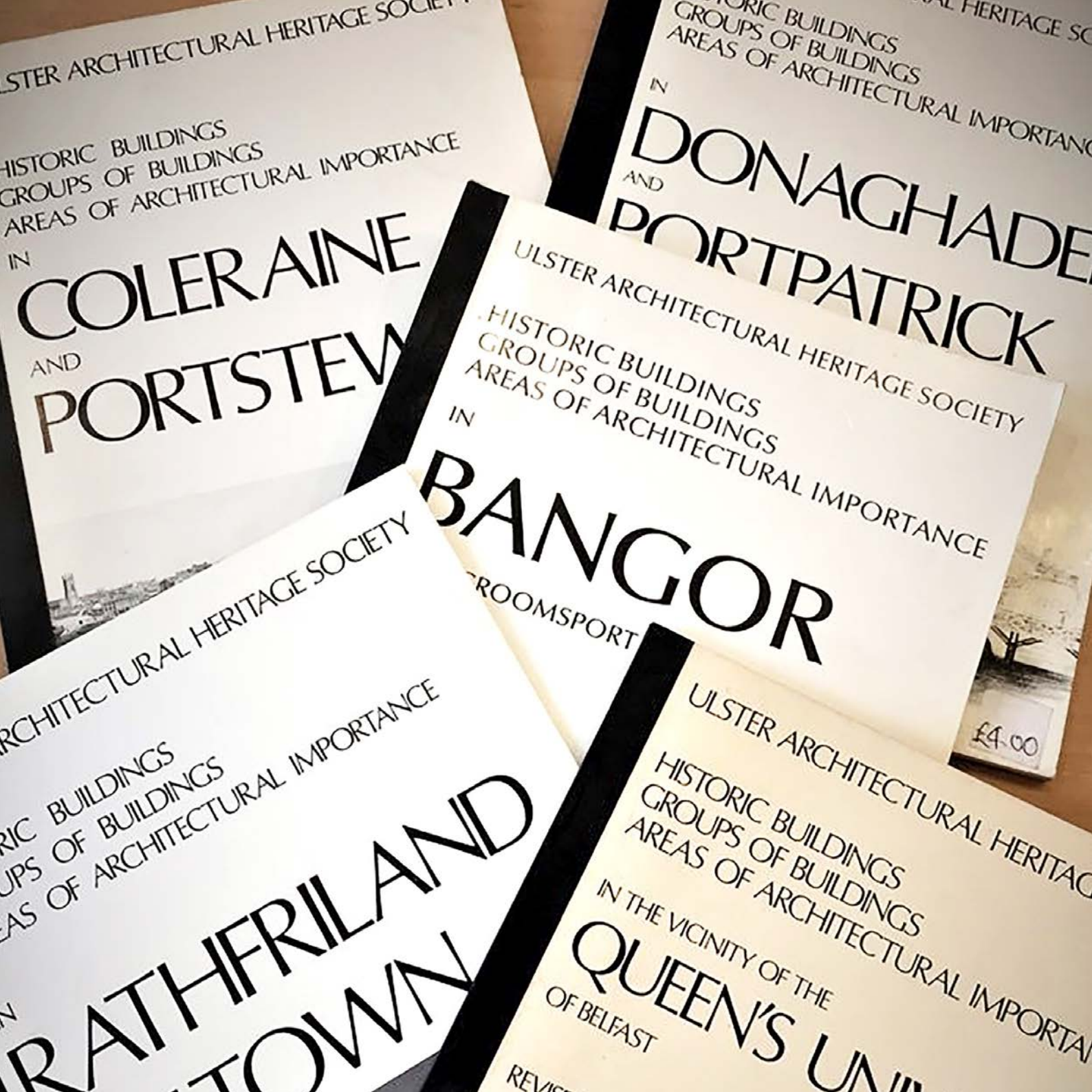
Throughout our Heritage: How To? Guides we refer to heritage assets as buildings and monuments.

Thank you to David Bunting @ImagesNI for providing a selection of images for this guide.



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1 | Digital and physical research

Digital

The recent digitization of collections has enabled research material from all across the world to be easily accessible and readily available through the touch of a button. Enabling access to material that perhaps would not be otherwise possible, online research can open up the potential of finding like-minded individuals researching similar topics/ ideas, new and exciting research methods and further research possibilities.

What condition is it in?

Carrying out research in a physical capacity is an extremely rewarding, but time consuming practice. A sensory experience, it enables participants to physically touch materials, get a feel for them and smell them, creating a tangible link to our ancestral heritage.

It is an experience from beginning to end:

- Climate controlled rooms
- Wearing cotton gloves
- Reading with a magnifying glass
- Storing your belongings in lockers
- Placing historic artefacts on stands
- Using projectors, cassette players and film screens



This guide covers some of the resources you can consult that can help you uncover information about the building, place or people you are researching.

Film

People

Images: photographs, architectural drawings, illustrations

Maps

Publications: newspapers, books, OS memoirs

Oral history

Letters

Objects/Artefacts



2 | Background information

Following on from the **How To? Read** and **Record Heritage Guides**, finding out more about your historic building or monument through research is an important step in the foundations of any project, in order to promote, conserve, protect and/or regenerate heritage. Undertaking thorough research prior to the commencement of a heritage project can greatly illuminate your heritage asset's past, rarity and uniqueness of your building or monument, thus resulting in a better project application e.g. when applying for listed building consent, planning permission and/or a funding application.

Any historical information is relevant when applying for listed building consent (LBC), planning permission or relevant funding applications.

Research resources and findings forthcoming for every heritage asset will differ, depending on a multitude of factors such as social context, location and the quality of past and present historical recording.

Before commencing any research project, it is important to define the type of heritage you are researching. This will help you establish what information is out there, what you do know and what areas you may wish to explore further.

Questions to ask yourself when carrying out research:

- Where is your heritage asset located?
- What are the boundaries associated with your heritage asset (curtilage)?
- What date was your heritage asset constructed?
- Did your heritage asset undergo phased development?
- What architectural style is your heritage asset?
- Who designed your heritage asset?
- Is your heritage asset designated?
- Is your heritage asset in a Conservation Area?

Other sources of information to consult:

An archive can include a vast array of sources, ranging from historical documents and records, to images; referencing a specific place, person, building or institution. Archives can also include private and institutional collections.

Research within archives can offer you an array of sources such as:

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| • Accounts | • Maps |
| • Artefacts | • Measured Drawings |
| • Audio visuals | • Newspapers |
| • Diaries | • Photographs |
| • Letters | • Publications |
| • Manuscripts | |

3 | Maps

Current and historic maps are a great way to pinpoint when a building or structure may have been built, or have been lost, if you do not know the dates. Maps can also highlight phased development, settlement growth, place name development and expansion/growth of villages, towns and cities.

Some of the first editions of Ordnance Survey Maps are available digitally for you to consult on web map viewers such as the Historic Environment Map Viewer by the Historic Environment Division and by the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI). OS County Series 1st Edition (c.1830), 2nd Edition (c. 1860) and 3rd Edition (c. 1900) can be overlaid to compare and contrast significant detail.

Google Maps is also a useful way of gaining a ‘street view’ of a heritage asset if visible from a public path or road. Google Maps also has the ability to display imagery back over time enabling glimpses of seasonal perspectives, potential phased development and/or demolition.

The Trinity Glucksman Map Library includes a dedicated centre for cartographic materials including maps, atlases, rare materials and modern maps.

4 | Photographs

When researching a historic building or monument, photographs and photographic records are some of the most valuable resources you can come across. Whether you wish to research how a building may have developed, reinstate a characterful/historic detail, date a particular building or even compare how an asset and its location has changed, photographs provide that snapshot in time to allow you to do so.

What is the photograph telling you?

- Is it capturing a historic event or a personal memory?
- What is in the photo?
- Is the photograph staged or candid?
- Are there people in the photograph? If so, what are they wearing?
- Is the photograph date marked?
- Is there writing on the back of the photograph/a personal note?



You can consult collections held by government departments on an appointment basis but you should also check with your local museum or library, as well as friends and family if your research project is based locally to you. Photographs, illustrations and paintings may also help you piece together the social and cultural history associated with a place over time. Social media groups and historical societies can also be a great source for photographic evidence of a particular area or asset, helping you identify a heritage asset and/or the people within images.

When searching archival collections for historic photographs do not be disheartened if you cannot find your selected building or monument at first instance. Play around with keyword searches to include:

- Former asset names
- Significant events and time periods
- Former street names
- Neighboring streets with views and vistas of your asset
- Adjacent buildings
- Wider aerial shots

5 | Publications

Depending on the extent and scale of your research for example, are you researching an architect or a specific architectural firm who worked in NI and further afield, or conducting research more locally, there will be a variety of publications available for you to consult. Contacting your local library and museum can provide you with a great start, pointing you in the direction of locally produced materials from local authors, as well as historical and heritage organisations. Many of these organisations may also have a reference library or may help to point you in the right direction for further reading. Also keep an eye out for photographs or illustrations, and the references used in publications as these might lead to other sources of information that open up a new line of enquiry that you haven't yet pursued.

What can a publication provide us with?

- Reference sources
- A culmination of previous research
- An understanding of ideas
- Critical analysis
- A new line of enquiry
- An approach to research
- Photographic content
- Maps

6 | Census records

A moment in time

The available census records of Ireland date from 1901-1911, illustrating statistics in regards to citizens and their lives. The census records include information about:

- Household residents
- Age
- Employment status
- Religion
- Marital status
- Health
- Living arrangements

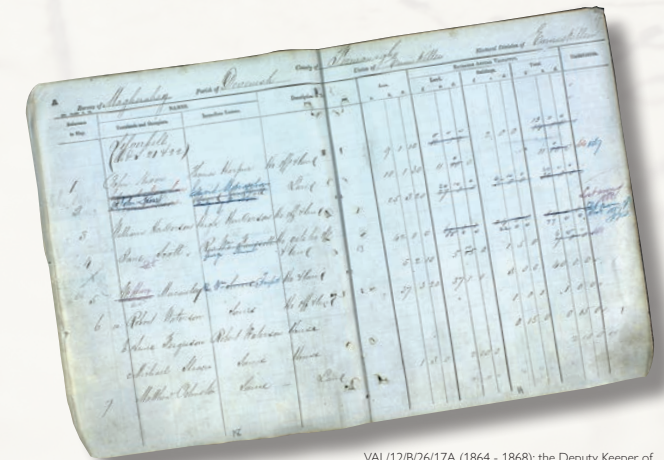
Census records, at first glance, can be overwhelming to interpret. More information on how to use Census Records can be found online: www.census.nationalarchives.ie/help/help.html

7 | Valuation records

Property valuations were carried out on an annual basis. Valuation Records are a useful research method in determining the number of buildings on a site, associated land and the annual value for tax purposes. Many Valuations Records are now digitised and publically accessible online. The Griffiths Valuation record was the first of its kind in Ireland dating from c. 1848-1864.

What can valuation records tell us?

- Quality of dwelling
- Size of dwelling
- Head of household
- Forename and surname
- Occupants in relation to head of the house
- Changes in occupancy
- Acreage
- Value at the time of record
- Townland/street



VAL/12/B/26/17A (1864 - 1868): the Deputy Keeper of the Records Public Record Office of Northern Ireland.

More information on how to use valuation records can be found on the nidirect website: www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/about-valuation-revision-books

8 | Old newspapers

Old newspapers can sometimes be a fantastic place to start for a lesser known building such as a domestic dwelling. For example, newspapers may include details of land sales, and building sales following land purchases, allowing you to establish an estimated construction date, or even the name of the architect or developer. There are a number of searchable newspaper archives available online, however most will require you to pay a fee. You can also access old newspapers through libraries or institutions such as PRONI.

What more can newspapers tell us?

- Significant events involving the building or locality
- Births, marriages, deaths of occupants
- Events involving individuals at that address
- Descriptions of the building (for example, in sales particulars)
- Historic uses of the building
- Who helped to construct the building
- Social history
- Planning history

9 | Where to start with your research

The choice of potential sources can sometimes be overwhelming, so where do you start? This will be largely dependent on the nature of the building or monument in question, and what the information is you require. In most cases, if you have access to a computer, it is easiest to start online.

If the building or monument is listed, often there will be a record of historical information appended to its listing. You can find out if the building or site is protected through the online Historic Environment Map Viewer, which holds a link to the appropriate records. If the record is complete, this will give you a historic overview, including references, which will offer different avenues to explore.

If the building or site is not listed, or the record is incomplete, you will need to draw on the information you know to find relevant sources. This can be as basic as knowing the name of the building or the address, or even just the location. You can then use a range of sources to build up a picture of the site. Old maps can be useful, as they can include historic building names, street names, and can give you rough dates of construction, extension or remodeling.

Once you have established a building name, address or architect, you have more to search with. Conducting a generic online search can offer you further basic information to draw on in your research. Be wary of citing sources which do not offer valid references, however these sources can give you clues which you can then validate yourself. Once you have got together as much basic information as possible, you can start to systematically explore a range of online resources.

If you would like to undertake research in a library or institution, you can often explore their catalogue online and take note of sources you wish to see in person. This helps you to narrow down your search and make your time there more productive. If you do not have online access, you can contact your library, local heritage group, or another institution, such as PRONI, and they may be able to offer you further assistance in your initial research.

To help you on your research journey, we have compiled some examples of the information you can glean from different sources.

Mullylusty Cottage

257 Mullylusty Road, Mullylusty, Belcoo, Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh, BT93 5AL



Northern Bank

1-3 Waring Street, Belfast, Co. Antrim, BT1 2DX

SOURCE: Department for Communities Building Database	USEFUL FOR: Evidences current use, grade, criteria for listing, extent of listing, date of construction and history.	EVIDENCE: Historic Building reference number: HB12/10/002
Census Records National Archives: Census of Ireland 1911	Evidences ages, religion, employment status, health and living arrangements to name a few.	As of 1911: • x 3 rooms • x 3 windows to principal elevation • x 4 inhabitants • Thatch roof (perishable material) • Stone walls
Historic Map Viewer	OS County Series 1st Edition (c. 1830)	Building on the site c. 1830. Coincides with predicted construction date.

SOURCE: Department for Communities Building Database	USEFUL FOR: Evidences former use, current use, grade, criteria for listing, extent of listing, date of construction, architect, history and phased development.	EVIDENCE: Historic Building reference number: HB26/50/061
Dictionary of Irish Architects	Phased Development Architect	Architect: Charles Lanyon
National Museum NI Photographic Collection	Hogg and Belfast Telegraph Collection	Search trials include 'Northern Bank Waring Street', 'Belfast Bank', 'Charles Lanyon' and 'Waring Street, Belfast'.
Publications	Patton, M. 2015 <i>Central Belfast: An Historical Gazetteer 2nd ed</i> , Ulster Architectural Heritage Society, Northern Ireland.	Featured Pgs. 367-368
Conservation Area Appraisal	Details Conservation Area boundaries, designation, historical background information of the area, land use character and enhancement strategies.	Belfast: City Centre Cathedral Conservation area Design Guide and Conservation Area Map
Historic Map Viewer	OS County Series 1st Edition (c. 1830) OS County Series 3rd Edition (c. 1900)	Building on the site c. 1830. Phased development visible by c. 1900.

SOURCE:	USEFUL FOR:	COLLECTIONS OF INTEREST:	LINK:
National Museums Northern Ireland (NMNI)	• Photographs	• The Harland and Wolff Collection of shipyard photographs, taken by R.J. Welch (1859—1936); • W A Green (1870—1958) photography of rural industry.	www.nmni.com/collections/history/photographs
Department for Communities: Historic Environment Division (DfC:HED) Historic Environment Record of Northern Ireland (HERoNI)	• Photographs • Listed Building Database • Heritage At Risk NI • Architectural History • Historic Mapviewer	• The Historic Environment Record of Northern Ireland; • The McCutcheon collection and the University of Cambridge aerial photographs; • Listed Building information; • Sites and monuments information; • Industrial Heritage record & Maritime archaeology.	https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/topics/historic-environment/historic-environment-record-northern-ireland-heroni
The Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI)	• Photographs • Social History • Architectural History • Historic maps	• Genealogical sources such as church registers, landed estate records, court records and wills.	https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/public-record-office-northern-ireland-proni
Britain From Above	• Photographs	• Aerial photographic archive collection ranging from 1919-2006.	www.britainfromabove.org.uk
Ulster Architectural Heritage	• Publications • Advice and guidance	• Publications relating to architectural heritage including architectural gazetteers through to the Architects of Ulster series and not forgetting the area-based Lists of Historic Buildings, Groups of Buildings and Areas of Architectural Importance.	https://www.ulsterarchitecturalheritage.org.uk/shop/
Ulster Historical Foundation	• Publications	• Publications relating to history and genealogy.	www.ancestryireland.com
Wordwell	• Publications	• Publications range from Irish heritage, history, archaeology, culture and society.	www.wordwellbooks.com
Orpen Press	• Publications	• Orpen Press are an Irish book publishing company with titles relating to Irish society and culture.	www.orpenpress.com

SOURCE:	USEFUL FOR:	COLLECTIONS OF INTEREST:	LINK:
General Registration Office of Northern Ireland (GRONI)	• Social History	• Birth, adoption, death, marriage and civil partnership records.	https://geni.nidirect.gov.uk/
General Register Office, Ireland	• Social History	• Births, marriages and deaths.	https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/af7893-general-register-office/
National Archives of Ireland	• Social History	• 1901 and 1911 Census.	https://www.nationalarchives.ie/genealogy/1901-1911-census/
National Library of Ireland	• Social History	• Catholic Parish Registers.	http://www.nli.ie/en/parish-register.aspx
British Newspaper Archive	• Social History • Newspaper archives	• A collection of digitised newspapers. The collection houses news articles, family notices, letters, obituaries and advertisements.	https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/
National Folklore Collection at University College Dublin	• Social History	• The collection ranges from audio, visual, art, photographs and publications detailing beliefs, games, clothing, song, music and dance associated with folklore.	www.ucd.ie/irishfolklore/en/
Belfast City Council Building Control Archive via the Planning Architecture Design Database Ireland (PADDI).	• Architectural History	• Working drawings submitted for approval to Belfast City Council Building Control as required by law for all Belfast buildings from 1870 onwards.	www.paddi.net/
The Irish Architectural Archive	• Architectural History	• Drawings, photographs, manuscripts and publications on Irish architecture.	www.iarc.ie
Dictionary of Irish Architects	• Architectural History	• Information about Irish architects, builders and craftsmen working in Ireland throughout 1720 – 1940.	www.dia.ie
Archiseek	• Photographs	• Online platform detailing the Buildings of Ireland by province, including Ulster, Unbuilt Ireland, Lost Irish Buildings and Worldwide Buildings.	www.archiseek.com

For more information on How To?
Research Heritage visit the
Hands-On Heritage website
www.handsonheritage-ni.org.uk
where you can access related
Heritage: How To? Guides.

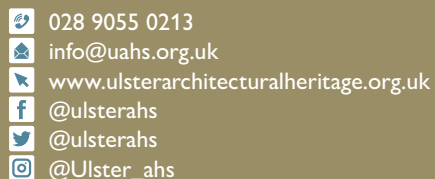
Promotion – Protection – Conservation – **Regeneration**

Ulster Architectural Heritage (UAH) works to promote the historic built environment, its protection, conservation and heritage-led regeneration, through advice and support, advocacy, publications, events, and projects delivery. Since its formation in 1967, the UAH has established itself as the lead independent voice for the historic built environment across the nine counties of Ulster, a fearless campaigner for historic buildings, a generous resource of information on local architecture and a source of advice on conservation.

UAH has had much success in influencing public opinion in favour of conservation of our historic built environment. UAH carries out reports, assessments, monitoring of the historic built environment and makes representations relating to planning and policy. UAH educates, engages and informs on built heritage through a wide range of events, publications and projects.



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