HERITAGE ASSET AUDIT

DOWNPATRICK / NORTH BELFAST
ARMAGH / UPPER LOUGH ERNE & STRABANE

MAY 2018

HERITAGE FUND

Northern Ireland environment link

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www.communities-ni.gov.uk

Introduction

The historic environment plays an important role in providing a sense of place and identity, supporting well-being, and promoting economic growth and community cohesion. As such, it is crucial that it is understood, valued, protected and made accessible to current and future generations.

Collectively referred to as 'heritage assets' in this report, these significant archaeological sites and monuments, historic buildings, industrial sites, artefacts, historic gardens and other elements of our historic environment are tangible connections to our past, and should be considered a finite resource.

In order to effectively protect and manage these assets, it is important to collate our information to understand what heritage assets we have and what organisational assets are available to help them reach their potential.

This report is the outcome of a pilot project. It includes five audits covering different geographical areas in Northern Ireland – North Belfast, Downpatrick, Armagh, Upper Lough Erne and Strabane. The audits examine the heritage assets of a defined area, alongside the capacity and activities of the relevant heritage organisations. They aim to build a picture of the sector and identify opportunities for development that can further support our historic environment while strengthening community cohesion, opportunities and economic growth.

Background to the report: HLF Catalyst

There has been a sense that the heritage sector in Northern Ireland has been overly reliant on Government funding. Issues surrounding a lack of capacity for groups and individuals is thought to be a major contributing factor, stifling growth and increasing vulnerability of assets and heritage organisations. In recent years, and especially since 2015, this issue has become increasingly pressing, with cuts to public funding having a direct impact on Government grants and assistance. This led to an increased demand for relevant support and opportunities for capacity building.

Seeing the increased need within the sector for developing fundraising capacity, Heritage Lottery Fund designed a new programme – Catalyst - which opened in 2013 with the aim of helping to develop and enhance the fundraising capacity of the heritage sector across the UK. There were a range of methods, including the delivery of a range of workshops, training courses, mentoring and continuous professional development. In 2013 NIEL was awarded funding by Heritage Lottery Fund to design and deliver a fundraising capacity building and training programme, through the HLF Catalyst Umbrella Programme – "Investing in Northern Ireland's Heritage" www.heritagefundraisingni.org.

The programme has addressed a wide range of issues and training, including fundraising capacity training, vocational and practical workshops, professionally accredited courses, mentoring and continuous professional development. There is a full summary and evaluation of the programme in the report conclusion.

At the same time as Catalyst was progressing, other changes were happening in the structure of Government in Northern Ireland. As well as the creation of new Councils under the Review of Public Administration, new Central Government Departments were also being formed. Under this new framework, the historic environment moved to the Department for Communities. The new Historic Environment Division took a pro-active approach to developing links with the wider sector. Since 2016 the Heritage sector in Northern Ireland has had a much increased level of engagement, developing new approaches to how we work together and how we connect with other sectors. In developing a wide range of proposals, it has become evident that we need to have a better understanding of the sector's tangible and organisational assets. This understanding is a key component of improving our utilisation of the assets, building on good practice and reassessing our strategic aims and operations.

The NI Programme for Government was published in draft form in 2016, and is the highest level strategic document of the Executive – setting out the priorities that it will pursue in the current Assembly mandate, and the most significant actions it will take to address them. The really important thing to note with with PfG is that it adopts a new approach. The actions and outcomes are cross-cutting. This PfG presents opportunities for sectors like Heritage, which can have multiple impacts across government, and across society. The sector's sense is that for heritage to maximise our impact we need to have a greater and more in-depth understanding of our 'assets', our organisations and our opportunities.

The Catalyst programme itself concluded in March 2018, and as part of the wider evaluation NIEL has partnered with Heritage Lottery Fund and the Department for Communities Historic Environment Division to carry out a review of some aspects of the Catalyst programme, and to undertake an audit of the organisations and assets that make up the 'heritage sector' in 5 specific localities. The aim is to develop a 'state of the sector' view in the selected geographic areas, setting out the main heritage assets in that area, what the sector has achieved so far and what their potential is to deliver in the future.

How Heritage Can Deliver for Everyone

In order to analyse the heritage around us, it is important to have some sense of what heritage means in our society. Our built heritage and historic environment are key assets to Northern Ireland, with the potential to revitalise communities and our economy while enhancing the distinctiveness that attracts tourist to visit.

A range of activities have already been undertaken by the Heritage Sector in Northern Ireland. One of the key elements has been the production of a new 'narrative' which aims to briefly set out the opportunities which our heritage presents. 'Treasure the Past; Enrich the Future' seeks to show how heritage can deliver for everyone in our society, and through a wide range of mechanisms.

- Supporting Prosperity – We know that heritage is an important economic driver; every £1 invested generates up to £1.60 in extra economic activity. Heritage does this through promoting tourism, finding new life for old buildings, providing an authenticity and uniqueness to our 'places' and helping to attract economic investment.

- Strengthening Our Society – Heritage improves our quality of life and strengthens our society. It helps to create greater social cohesion by providing a sense of identity and providing opportunities for communities to engage with one another; it provides health benefits (a recent research paper identified the value of visiting heritage sites as equal to £1,646 per person per year) and at a time when the UK is suffering severe housing shortage there are numerous opportunities to provide homes in historic buildings.
- Shaping our Character – When we invest in heritage we are protecting and celebrating the character of our region and people. Our heritage makes our places distinctive and helps them to retain their character, allowing them to make the most of their 'cultural capital'. This 'sense of place' underpins our society.
- This understanding of the wider value of our heritage will be significant as our sector seeks to highlight the importance of what we do. It sets an important background to the Heritage Asset Audits, and we will return to it in the concluding sections of the paper. Before going into the detail of the audits it is however important, to set out some other aspects of the wider context.

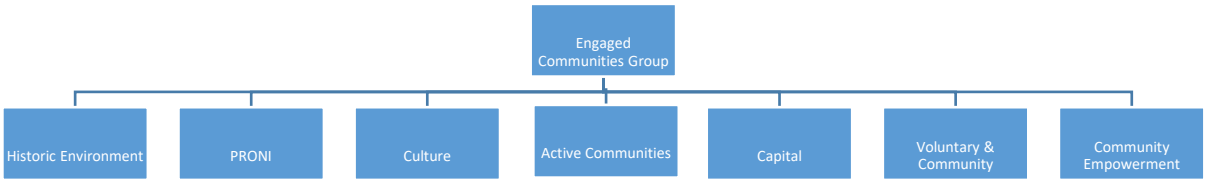
Context

The five areas selected for the audit all have their own character, strengths, issues and opportunities. However, they all exist within the broader context of the heritage sector within Northern Ireland. The following section is not meant to be an exhaustive survey of the sector, but just an overview of the main structural elements which are relevant.

Central Government Reorganisation

In 2016 the number of NI Executive departments reduced from twelve to nine. The main change, relevant to heritage, was the concentration of previously disparate sections under the new Department for Communities. The new Department took over many of the heritage and cultural sections from the old Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure as well as the Historic Environment elements of the Department of the Environment. One undoubted negative within this shift is the division between 'built' and 'natural' heritage, as 'natural' moved to the new Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.

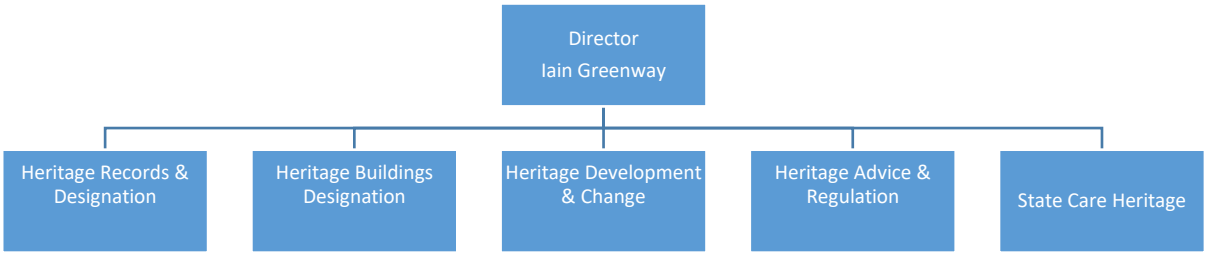
However, it was widely felt that the co-location of a range of heritage-related sections within the new Department could be beneficial. Historic Environment sits within the Engaged Communities Group.



Historic Environment Division (HED)

The Historic Environment Division of Department for Communities (DfC) is responsible for the recording, designation, conservation and protection of the built heritage in NI. HED itself has been substantially restructured as shown below. As part of that process a new strategic aim for the division was developed:

'Supporting and sustaining vibrant communities and a strong economy through realising the significant, ongoing value of our historic environment.'



HED carries out a range of functions:

Listed buildings - The list of buildings is a register recording all types of structures; the majority were recorded during a systematic survey of buildings in Northern Ireland which began in 1974. A more detailed second Survey is currently ongoing, with the majority of areas covered. Over 8,500 buildings or structures have been listed in Northern Ireland. These are divided into A, B+ and B according to their relative importance and to aid grant administration. Grade A and B+ together account for approximately 10% of those listed and are deemed to be of greatest importance. Grade B+ may have lower quality additions or alterations, greater historical importance over a similar grade B, or have exceptional features that are clearly over the general standard of grade B.

Built Heritage at Risk Northern Ireland (BHARNI) - The BHARNI register has been compiled by Ulster Architectural Heritage (UAH) for DfC. The Register highlights almost 500 buildings and monuments of architectural and historic interest whose future seems threatened but may be suitable for restoration and repair.

Historic monuments - provide a record of human settlement from 7,000 BC to the 20th century and include a wide range of structures such as forts, ruins and tombs. There are over 16,000 historic monuments recorded in Northern Ireland. Of these, 1,993 have been 'scheduled'. Many of these are in private ownership, but there are also 190 historic monuments in state care. State Care and scheduled monuments together represent those archaeological sites and monuments which are of greatest importance within Northern Ireland.

Local Government

As part of the Review of Public Administration process, the number of councils in Northern Ireland reduced from 26 to 11 in April 2015. This gave councils new powers and responsibilities including:

- Community Planning
- Power of Well-being
- Spatial planning
- Some increased responsibility around economic development and tourism

Each council has a duty to produce a community plan, which will effectively be the overall 'strategic plan' for the local area. The key difference between these plans and previous ones, is that the local community must be involved in the production and delivery of the plan. At the time of writing, most community plans have been produced, and many of them offer opportunities for heritage, cultural and environmental inputs.

Spatial Planning

Spatial planning has similarly undergone major changes. Responsibility for planning largely moved from Central to local Government, while an overarching Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland: Planning for Sustainable Development was introduced. In terms of built heritage, the policy provisions of Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning Archaeology and Built Heritage (PPS6) have been retained – covering World Heritage Sites, Listed Buildings, Sites and Monuments, Conservation Areas, Historic Parks and Gardens, Industrial Heritage and non-listed vernacular buildings. However, such responsibility will be covered in the Councils new Local Development Plans. In short, local government has a much expanded remit for protecting and enhancing our historic environment.

Programme for Government

The new (still draft) PfG sets out a new way of working for Northern Irelands Central Government Departments. The PfG is aimed at achieving specific outcomes, which require cross-departmental co-operation. The objective is to get rid of the 'silos' of government, and develop a streamlined, outcomes-focused way of working. The graphic below shows the 14 strategic outcomes which touch on every aspect of government, including the attainment of good health and education, economic success and confident and peaceful communities. In addition to merely fulfilling statutory obligations, the outcomes aim to target those things that can make real improvements to the quality of life for the citizen. The outcomes are supported by 42 indicators which are clear statements for change. Each indicator is accompanied by a measure largely derived from existing statistics. These will show how the Executive is performing in relation to the outcomes and will provide a basis to monitor progress and take corrective action.

This new approach within the PfG offers opportunities for a sector like 'Heritage', which has so many cross-cutting elements, which underpin much of our society. Working together, the heritage sector has identified a number of potential areas to focus on (reflecting PfG indicators) including:

- Housing
- Respect
- Greenhouse gas emissions
- Cultural participation
- Tourism

- Wellbeing
- Self-efficacy
- Economy
- Skills

It is this approach which is reflected in the 'Treasure the Past' document, and which the sector now needs to embrace. Indeed, we do not have to look too far for examples of where 'related' sectors have sought to show how they can have multiple impacts across society. The Arts Council has championed this approach for many years, and more recently the NI Environment Link 'Manifesto' for the Environment has a similar ethos.

Advisory and financial support to the Sector

There are a number of 'structural' and networking organisations, as well as other advisory supports available to the sector. Again, the aim here is not to provide an exhaustive catalogue of who's who, but rather a brief overview of some of the networking bodies and supports that are available.

Heritage Lottery Fund

HLF support heritage projects around the UK and have a number of grant schemes suitable for heritage in Northern Ireland. They are currently facing reduced levels of lottery income and are reviewing their grant programmes, with the intention of announcing new programmes for 2019. It should also be noted that HLF have an important strategic role for the sector, and through their programmes seek to support structural weaknesses. Some of the particularly relevant programmes include:

Heritage Enterprise Grant - To address the conservation deficit involved in repairing a heritage building. The cost of repairing a neglected historic building is often so high that restoration simply is not commercially viable. The Heritage Enterprise Grant makes such schemes possible by funding some of the repair costs with grants of £100,000 to £5million. Local examples of this grant include the Bishopsgate Hotel, Derry and Titanic Hotel in Belfast.

Resilient Heritage - Resilient Heritage grants of £3,000-£250,000 are to help strengthen organisations build the capacity of staff and volunteers to bettermanage heritage in the long term.

Our Heritage - Offers grants of £10,000–£100,000 for exploring your local heritage.

Museums Sector

The Museums sector is broadly made up of three groups of museums – Independents (such as the military museums); local government such as the Tower Museum in Derry or the Braid in Ballymena; and National Museums such as the Ulster Museum and Ulster American Folk Park. National Museums NI manage some of Northern Ireland's most popular visitor attractions, and are also an important source of advice. Other museums in NI are supported through the NI Museums Council. As well as advocating for museums, NIMC support local museums in maintaining and improving their standards of collections care and public services, particularly through administration of the Accreditation Scheme. NIMC can also provide grant aid to Accredited Museums.

Archives

Many museums and Museum Services across Northern Ireland include a range of archives within their collections. The main public repository in Northern Ireland is the Public Records Office for Northern Ireland. Similar to NMNI, they are home to very extensive collections of 'material' but also have high levels of expertise and can provide advice on archive issues. There are a range of other archives of course around NI. Some of these are located within museums, and some are library collections or archives in their own right – such as the Armagh Robinson Library or the Benburb Priory Library. Given the nature of the archival sector, there are also sources of support outside NI – such as through the UK's National Archives and the National Archives of Ireland. A new Accreditation programme is currently being developed for Archives across the UK.

Northern Ireland Environment Link (NIEL)

NIEL is the networking and forum body for organisations interested in the natural and built environment of Northern Ireland. They have in excess of 100 members and bring together a range of expertise and experience.

Heritage Trust Network

Heritage Trust Network (HTN) are a membership organisation who provide help and guidance to groups wishing to restore a heritage building. In summer 2017 they launched a Heritage Toolkit to support groups with all elements involved in taking on a building including fundraising, governance, managing projects and finding viable solutions.

Architectural Heritage Fund

The Architectural Heritage Fund is the leading social investor in the heritage in the UK and in 2017 introduced a support officer for Northern Ireland to assist local communities who are seeking to rescue and re-utilise a historic building which they value. Its 2 year programme, funded by the Department for Communities and the Pilgrim Trust is all about Growing Community Enterprise Through Heritage. *www.ahfund.org.uk*

Historic Environment Division

HED is responsible for supplying advice to owners on best practice for looking after their buildings. HED is also available to visit a building and offer on-site advice.

The Division also provides advice to District Councils and Departmental planning authorities when they are:

- preparing Local Development Plans
- determining planning applications with potential impacts on the heritage assets we record and protect
- investigating potential planning enforcement cases, with impacts on the heritage assets we record and protect

The Division has statutory authority to provide funding for listed buildings and scheduled monuments (see note above). The levels of funding available to and from HED have reduced since 2015 and in 2016 HED consulted on a Historic Environment Fund to decide how to most effectively utilise their budget. The Historic Environment Fund is currently divided into four funding streams: Repair, Research, Regeneration and Revival.

Princes Regeneration Trust

The Prince's Regeneration Trust works throughout the United Kingdom to ensure that important historic buildings at risk of demolition or decay are preserved, regenerated and re-used. The Trust focuses its heritage-led regeneration in socially and economically deprived areas of the UK.

Most of the buildings the Trust is involved with are listed buildings and some are also important local monuments in conservation areas. The Trust works in partnership with building owners, developers, community groups, local authorities and other public bodies to find sensitive and sustainable new uses for historic buildings at risk.

Ulster Architectural Heritage (UAH)

UAH promote the value of built heritage, encouraging its protection and re-use through heritage-led regeneration. In addition to campaigning for historic buildings, they offer general guidance on restoration, funding and planning matters. UAH also record and maintain a database of Built Heritage at Risk in Northern Ireland (BHARNI) as part of an agreement with the Historic Environment Division.

Heritage Funding Directory

Managed by The Heritage Alliance and the Architectural Heritage Fund, the Heritage Funding Directory is a free, easy-to-use guide to financial and other support for anyone undertaking UK related heritage projects.

Entries cover historic buildings, landscapes, parks and gardens, churchyards and cemeteries, industrial heritage, archives, historic churches, museums, archaeology, environmental, heritage skills and conservation and more.

RSA Heritage Index

The RSA Heritage Index, produced by the Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA) in collaboration with HLF is a resource to inform decision making. The Index brings together a number of datasets covering many elements of heritage to provide a picture of the heritage assets and activities at a local scale.

The 2016 Index was the first to include Northern Ireland, where the work has been carried out by Council Area. Research was carried out to assess six ‘domains of heritage’: historic built environment; museums, archives and artefacts, industrial heritage, parks and open spaces, landscape and natural heritage and cultures and memories. This involved the collation of data from sources including the Department for Communities NI, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, NISRA, Heritage Lottery Fund and Discover NI. The councils were ranked from 1-11 for

each domain and ranked overall, according to their composite score. Each individual audit within this report will contain the relevant dataset from the RSA index.

HLF Catalyst Umbrella Programme : "Investing in Northern Ireland's Heritage"

In concluding this section on support mechanisms which are available to the heritage sector, it is important to provide a brief overview of the activities of the HLF Catalyst programme which was managed by NIEL in Northern Ireland. In the Conclusion of the report we have included a brief overview of some of the learnings from the programme.

In 2013 the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and Arts Council England established an investment partnership of over £100 million to "….enable arts and heritage organisations to develop and explore innovative approaches to securing private giving…." through small, endowment and umbrella grants. The HLF Catalyst Umbrella Programme with a budget of £3.3 million was designed within this investment partnership to address a sustainable future for "buildings, landscapes and collections" through investment to "unlock private giving and valuable know-how" by providing networking and training opportunities for "heritage" organisations to come together to share their skills and knowledge.

Nine UK umbrella organisations were awarded funding –

- The Prince's Regeneration Trust
- The Heritage Alliance
- The National Archives
- Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service
- Hampshire Country Council Arts and Museum Service
- Cornwall County Council
- Wales Council for Voluntary Action
- Arts and Business Scotland, and
- Northern Ireland Environment Link

The programme in Northern Ireland was devised and managed by Northern Ireland Environment Link (NIEL), the umbrella body for the NI environment and heritage sector and the programme was developed by an initial consortium comprising NIEL, Common Purpose, Supporting Communities NI and the Ulster Business School, University of Ulster.

There was a perception that the "heritage" sector in Northern Ireland had been overly dependent on Government and public agency funding and international "goodwill" monies, to the detriment of the sector's capacity to earn from trading, secure independent and corporate funding and receive philanthropic donations. In addition, the prevailing overall economic climate of austerity presented its own considerable challenges to the Northern Ireland wider Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Third/NGO sector.

HLF awarded £216,500 towards an overall NI programme budget of £246,000 initially operational from January 2014 to December 2015 to meet original programme outputs of 780 individual participants across 50 heritage sector organisations. The Northern Ireland programme was extended

within the initial budget until June, 2016 and then further extended within the overall UK programme until March, 2018 with an overall extended budget of £398, 750 and extended HLF grant of £331, 700.

The programme was designed to develop and enhance organisational and individual skills, knowledge and experience in "new" funding source identification and "new" fundraising techniques - incorporating accredited and vocational training courses and workshops, peer and mentoring support, continuous professional development recognition and online information and learning resources.

The original main programme components were –

- Institute of Fundraising accredited training courses – at Introductory, Certificate and Diploma levels
- Vocational and practical learning workshops across the full fundraising portfolio range – Individual Donations; Online Giving; Major Donors; Legacies; Corporate Sponsorship and Support; Independent Trust and Foundation Grants; Government and Public Sector Grants and Contracts; and Social Enterprise and other Trading and Earnings
- Fundraising Advice Clinics and Consultancies
- Reflective practice and policy seminars, conferences and other events
- Complementary peer and mentoring and continuous professional development support facilities, and
- Establishment of a dedicated programme information and learning website.

NIEL worked with a number of recognised fundraising training and support agencies and consultancies to design and deliver the programme – Institute of Fundraising Northern Ireland and UK, Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action, Community Change, Business in the Community NI, niFundraising, Courtney Consulting, Will to Give, Dee Consulting, Building Change Trust, Chief Officers Third Sector (CO3), The Business Institute, University of Ulster, Fundraising Ireland/Charities Institute Ireland, Rural Community Network, North West Community Network, North Down Community Network, and a range of individual consultants, trainers and mentors.

In addition, the programme delivered a number of miscellaneous one-off activities and events, specifically –

- a fundraising themed annual conference and fundraisers' fair on behalf of NIEL targeting all of the NI heritage and environment sector
- co-hosting two IoF NI annual conferences and workshops
- continued liaison with Fundraising Ireland and IoF UK at their respective annual conferences
- co-hosting along with IoF NI and the National Trust a Northern Ireland "Fundraising Camp" delivered by Howard Lake's Fundraising UK consultancy
- European Union programmes' information workshops for the heritage and environment sector;
- collaborated and part funded with IoF Northern Ireland on research into the overall fundraising competence, capacity and resourcing of the NI Third Sector

- designed and delivered in association with Business in the Community NI a Corporate Engagement/Sponsorship series of workshops, peer mentoring, relationship building and consultancy bespoke to NI Protected Areas Network – part funded by the Department of Agriculture Environment and Rural Affairs
- leveraged additional Big Lottery resources and brokered with the Building Change Trust and NIEL the establishment of independent research into the potential of social investment for the sector – completed by New Philanthropy Capital
- designed and delivered a subsequent "Social Investment Readiness Pilot Programme" from programme resources and additional Building Change Trust monies
- a fundraising Masterclass, workshop and consultancy from Stephen Pidgeon, Fellow of the Institute of Fundraising and trainer/writer/consultant and author of "Love Your Donors (To Death)!", and
- a Legacy Fundraising Masterclass with Richard Radcliffe, author of "Why Legacies are Brilliant for Charities and How to Get Them"
- the programme collaborated with IoF Northern Ireland in undertaking research into the current state of fundraising competence, practice and resourcing across all of Northern Ireland's Third Sector – ("Fundraising in Northern Ireland", October, 2015)

HLF extended of the programme delivery period until March 2018. The extended programme incorporated the following elements -

- Continued IoF Northern Ireland and new Fundraising Ireland accredited fundraising training courses at Introductory Certificate level and on specific fundraising technique themed workshops
- Continued and new workshops, consultancy and peer and mentor learning on fundraising strategies and fundraising mix
- Continued and new events on specific "heritage sector" techniques for soliciting and receiving charitable donations – particularly on independent Trusts and Foundation grants, legacies, online donations and major donor giving
- Continued and new events on Government (European, regional and local) and public sector contracting and grants – focusing upon the new NI Department for Communities and Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
- Continued and new fundraising advisory surgeries, consultations and peer and mentoring support complementary to themed workshops and accredited training
- Continued and new "heritage" sector, capacity specific and geographical targeting and sub-sector bespoke fundraising training – addressing the built and natural heritage and environments – in association with the NI Protected Areas Network (noting a current HLF investment of some £12 million in Landscape Partnership Schemes);
- Continued and new liaison and collaborative delivery with HLF Northern Ireland in addressing its programme and geographical priorities – specifically, on "Heritage Enterprise" and the communities of Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon and Fermanagh and Omagh
- New best practice case studies, experiential learning and exchange and field study visits

- Continued and new enhancement of web-based fundraising information and learning facilities and resources – including new facilities such as e-magazines, webinars, information hubs and learning tool kits etc
- New fundraising trading and earning potential and practice – including corporate governance business models
- Continued and new **c**orporate engagement and sponsorship – across workshops, mentor learning networks and corporate collaboration
- New social enterprise, the social economy, asset transfer and social **i**nvestment training – building on the Building Change Trust and New Philanthropy Capital research initiative on the potential of social investment for the heritage sector (noted further above and below)
- Continued and new coordination and collaboration with key fundraising support stakeholder agencies and individuals on programme delivery, resourcing, economies of scale, management and impact - liaising with IoF Northern Ireland, Fundraising Ireland, Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action, NI Department for Communities, NI Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs and other relevant specialist interests
- Overall programme evaluation, shared learning, impact and continuing NI Community, Voluntary and Social Enterprise sector fundraising training and support promotion, sponsorship, resourcing and delivery.

One of the areas of work which saw a lot of interest through the programme was social finance. There were 2 major pieces of work undertaken. NIEL and Building Change Trust appointed New Philanthropy Capital to undertake a study of the opportunities for social finance within the environment/heritage sector in Northern Ireland. The report identified a number of barriers, but also high levels of interest. The second programme was a social investment pilot mentoring programme, again managed by NIEL and Building Change Trust. CO3 and University of Ulster developed a mentoring programme for 15 organisations, to help them become 'investment ready'. The project again showed the opportunities that are available, and a brief section on the findings is included in the Conclusion.

Methodology

It is important to note that this was a pilot project. An outline methodology was put in place at the beginning of the project, but the project management were also keen that the consultants would bring their own expertise and experience to the project. It was never expected that the 2 consultants would follow exactly the same process, nor that their final reports would necessarily have exactly the same structure.

Establish scope of study

Initial meetings between the consultants and NIEL and then with HED allowed the scope of the study to be established. Regular meetings (and telephone conversations) were held throughout in order to track progress and communicate any issues.

Five contrasting areas with different heritage profiles and activity were chosen to act as a pilot audit for Northern Ireland. Considering a number of geographic areas also allows comparison and

contrast, giving greater insight into conditions for success which can inform learning and guidance for other areas. A number of provisional areas were drawn up, with final selection decided in consultation with the Department.

The first issue was deciding the exact boundary of each study. The decision was made that a core area of study to be identified for detailed consideration, as well as a broader area which was to be reviewed in a more high-level way identify more significant and relevant sites. These areas were based on the relevant 2012 ward boundaries to allow easy linking other area audits.

Desktop survey

The desktop survey comprised a number of key steps in preparation for field work, assessment and project development.

- Initial information gathering involved identifying and reviewing existing heritage audits to inform the audit.
- A review of the RSA data of the relevant council areas to gain an overview of the heritage profiles of the areas under study.
- HED's digital resources were reviewed to identify heritage assets. Listed buildings, Sites and Monuments, Scheduled Zones, areas of Archaeological Potential, areas of Significant Architectural interest, Parks and Gardens, Industrial Heritage sites, Defence and Battle sites are all available on the Department for Communities 'Historic Environment Map Viewer' https://dfcgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=6887ca0873b446e39d2f82c80c8a9337. Where available, the 1st – 3rd edition OS County Series maps were also reviewed on the map viewer. The relevant digital datasets were downloaded. This information provided a record of the tangible heritage assets in the study areas, which was added to as more data is gathered.
- Relevant finds and artefacts from Museums, libraries and collections were identified in partnership with National Museums NI
- Relevant building preservation trusts, local history and heritage groups were identified.
- Heritage organisations and other relevant stakeholders in each audit area were identified and key organisations contacted and consulted at an early stage. Locally based material was reviewed.
- Museum Collections – National Museums NI also offered a huge amount of assistance, by searching through their databases for object and archive listings specific to each audit area. These listings have been attached as appendices to the report.

Review of the Catalyst Programme

As part of the wider HLF Catalyst Programme, a detailed review of Catalyst was carried out. This involved consideration of UK-wide findings as well as the local evaluations. A mid-term review of the NI programme had been carried out in 2016. This was substantially added to in the final period of the programme, from December 2017-March 2018.

Fieldwork and Consultation

An important part of the process was the field work and consultation. Much of this was carried out through a range of surveys and questionnaires, but it soon became apparent that different

approaches were required in different areas. In North Belfast for example, there was already a cluster of organisations who were keen to be involved, and happy to fill out a detailed questionnaire. In Fermanagh and Strabane, there was much less organisational activity, and in both of these areas there was more need for the consultants to go and meet people and glean more informal findings. In all areas there was a mixture of:

- On the ground research of area and heritage assets
- Meetings were organised with key organisations identified and to encourage involvement. These helped identify additional groups.
- Questionnaire of a select number of local groups and individuals

Heritage Asset Assessments

Following desk-based research, site visits and some initial discussions with stakeholders, the consultants were equipped to create a short list of the most significant assets in each area. A crucial part of the overall process was the creation of a bespoke template to undertake individual heritage asset assessments. This template was based upon a wide range of asset surveys, but has been designed for ease of use for practitioners/HED in the future. The Asset Assessment aimed to gather the following information:

Asset name/number	
HED ref number (if appropriate	
Heritage type	
Location	
Protection status	
Condition/ Sensitivity	
Ownership	
Brief description	
Context (Setting	
Site appraisal	
Benefits/potential	
Audience	
Partnerships	
Learning	
Community impact (involving communities)/regeneration/ volunteering	
Financial Implications – potential income opportunities and investment requirements	
Viability/constraints	
Comments	
General recommendatio	

Analysis

At this point all of the information – from desk research, surveys, discussions and heritage asset assessments – was gathered and analysed. Each separate report contains an overview of findings including a detailed SWOT analyisis, followed by a set of specific recommendations for each area.

The report was reviewed with NIEL and other stakeholders as the report was finalised.

Review of other Heritage Audits

A number of local heritage audits were reviewed in the early stages of this audit in order to inform the survey and report. Below is a short analysis of three of the audits reviewed, describing their purpose, approach and key learning gained. Although the audits reviewed were not identical in purpose or scope, it was still possible to learn from the various methodologies and approaches.

Mid and East Antrim Fixed Heritage Asset Audit

By Marianne O'Kane Boal Consultants (July 2015)

Introduction

This audit was commissioned by Mid and East Antrim Council (MEA). MEA was formed in 2015 as part of the Reform of Local Government in 2014, which saw the replacement of 26 councils with 11 "super councils". The reform involved the introduction of new responsibilities to councils including local planning, regeneration, community development and tourism development. With three registered museums in its remit, the purpose of this audit was investigate how to unlock the potential/ enhance role of the museums in relation to the wider heritage of MEA.

Approach

- Desktop survey to identify fixed heritage assets and a listing compiled of visible assets to explore further
- Site visits to the principal areas involved initial assessment and photographs
- Interpretive resources collected to aid research
- Scoring matrix developed
- Final report and recommendations based on findings

Learning

- This survey utilised the Historic Environment Division map viewer and databases.
- Visiting selected sites and some relevant groups provided a contemporary record and revealed local knowledge and opinions.
- With a large number of fixed assets identified, the scoring matrix was a useful way to determine significance of assets, identify any conservation or planning issues and explore their community and tourism potential.

Bienevenagh Coast and Lowlands Defence Heritage Audit

By quarto and Ulidia Heritage Services (April 2017)

Introduction

This audit was commissioned by the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust (CCGHT) who promote and develop the Causeway Coast and Glens area's 'scenic landscapes, important wildlife resources and… rich cultural heritage'. They wished to build on a 2015 CCGHT publication *Defending the Causeway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty* which identified the significance of the area's role in 20th century defence. A defence heritage audit was thought to be a valuable approach in assessing condition, identifying preservation need and exploring the potential for engagement with the heritage.

Approach

- Desktop Survey of key databases
- Stakeholder consultation – to inform research from an early stage
- Field Survey to verify nature and condition of the assets. Any threats to their material survival or setting were recorded.
- Sites were rated for accessibility
- Condition and access reports were combined to provide a site assessment score

Learning

- This survey utilised the HED databases to prepare ground for fieldwork and further research was carried out using the hard copy files held by HED
- Stakeholder engagement was useful for identifying appropriate solutions leading to well thought out, costed recommendations

(Lough Erne) Built Heritage Audit and Opportunities Report

By Sarah Gormley, Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork (CAF), Queen's University Belfast 2017

Introduction

This report was commissioned by the Lough Erne Landscape Partnership (LELP), established to '*help protect and enhance the built, natural and cultural heritage of the Lough Erne landscape'*. If formed part of the development stage for LELP and, assessing, identifying and recording the built heritage of sites within this area, in order to establish future priorities for preservation, interpretation and access.

Approach

- Ongoing consultation between the CAF team and the LELP Built Heritage Working Group
- Review of relevant publications
- Creation of a Geographical Information System to combine and synthesise all existing surveys and audits into a single record
- Desktop research using the HED map viewer and datasets

- Building survey to ensure up to date information and identify further buildings of interest – an Access database was used to capture historic buildings information
- Consultation with other stakeholders

Learning

- Use of GIS as a tool for analysing the information
- Information gathered in the audit used to propose a range of viable projects
- Themes identified as potential projects to enhance significance of sites and monuments
- Opportunities for improvement of significant buildings, including Buildings at Risk and other monuments
- Recommendations to inform future funding applications

Structure

The complex nature of the project, involving five separate areas and 2 consultants working independently, always meant that the final structure of the report would be difficult. Indeed, given that this was a pilot project, the overall structure was not actually finalised until the individual audits were underway. The overall structure is as follows:

1. Overall Introduction including Background to the project, Context, Methodology, Review of other Heritage Audits
2. Audit Area 1: Downpatrick
3. Audit Area 2: North Belfast
4. Audit Area 3: Armagh
5. Audit Area 4: Upper Lough Erne
6. Audit Area 5: Strabane
7. Conclusion, including summary of findings from the Catalyst programme, and Recommendations