

# HERITAGE AT RISK IN NORTHERN IRELAND

## REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

January 2019



## ULSTER ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE



A report by Ulster Architectural Heritage, as part of the Built Heritage at Risk Project, funded by Department for Communities, Historic Environment Division, 2013 - 2016. Published January 2019.

## FOREWARD:

The Built Heritage at Risk Northern Ireland (BHARNI) project was first established in 1993 as a partnership between the Ulster Architectural Heritage Society (UAHS) now retitled Ulster Architectural Heritage (UAH), and the then Environment and Heritage Service of the Department of the Environment which became NIEA, and now, the Historic Environment Division (HED) of the Department for Communities. It was initially named the 'Buildings at Risk' (BAR), becoming 'Built Heritage at Risk Northern Ireland' in 2006.

Our thanks go to Mrs Primrose Wilson CBE, current President of UAH, who was instrumental in establishing and maintaining the project. We would like to formally acknowledge her tremendous support, without which the heritage at risk project could not have succeeded. I also want to pay tribute to the Department Officers and UAH staff who over the years brought a focus and dynamism to the project ensuring it was both appropriate and innovative.

This report, commissioned in 2016, is based on statistics and information gathered at that time. The review and recommendations have been extensively developed in the interim period, and this report has formed the basis upon which UAH has proposed to move the heritage at risk project forward, in a recently renewed agreement with HED from April 2019. Though some figures may have changed to a degree in the intervening period, this is not seen to effect overall trends discussed in this report, and recommendations set out remain at time of release in 2019.

This report is set, not only to review all that has been achieved since 1993 and bench mark achievement against other models across these islands, but also to look to the future as the project once more undergoes a transformation. Transformation to respond to current social, economic and legislative context, particularly recent restructuring of government departments and the reform of local government encompassing a wider heritage remit becoming "Heritage at Risk Northern Ireland" (HARNI) in 2019.

Huge thanks are due to the UAH Chief Executive, Nikki McVeigh who brought her vision, diligence and precision to the production of the report ensuring it is both incisive and relevant. Assisted by other key contributors including UAH Vice Chair and Chair of Architecture, Planning & Policy, John Anderson, Heritage at Risk Officer Dr Connie Gerrow and former Heritage at Risk Officer, Leah O'Neill.

The past year, 2018, was a good time to reflect on the past and contemplate the future as HARNI in its various forms celebrated a quarter of a century of achievement. Over 300 Buildings at Risk have been saved, by way of the hard work of many individuals and groups across Northern Ireland. Thousands of copies of the Buildings at Risk catalogues and over 10,000 copies of the Directory of Traditional Skills publication have been distributed, a resource now made available online. Successful and popular events and conferences have been organised and of course innumerable buildings have been visited and catalogued. Much advice and support has been given freely, enhanced by the establishment of an online presence. Leading not only to the removal of buildings from the Heritage at Risk Register, but also better knowledge, understanding and care for the historic built environment, more generally across Northern Ireland over the last 25 years.

As we look forward it is clear our unique but finite architectural heritage has the potential to be at the centre of reinvigorated and cohesive communities acting as a catalyst for all the benefits - social, cultural, economical - entailed therein. In this report we have the seeds for a strengthening of the Heritage at Risk project and working partnerships with the progression of new initiatives, within the renewal of our valuable partnership with the Department for Communities, and working more directly with local authorities from April 2019.

We look forward to many more years of achievement.

**David J Johnston OBE**  
**Chairman, Ulster Architectural Heritage**

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*This is a report by Ulster Architectural Heritage (UAH), formerly Ulster Architectural Heritage Society (UAHS) as part of the Built Heritage at Risk Project, (BHARNI) funded by Department for Communities, Historic Environment Division, 2013 - 2016. The report is published in January 2019.*

*PLEASE NOTE: this report was largely compiled in advance of the change in trading name of Ulster Architectural Heritage Society to Ulster Architectural Heritage therefore these two titles are directly interchangeable for the purposes of this report. Copyright © UAH, referencing to be credited.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION:

Northern Ireland's historic environment is a finite, fragile and non-renewable asset which showcases our unique historical, cultural and physical identity, and promotes our pride of place. The historic environment is internationally accepted as key to sustainable income generation and tourism. Northern Ireland is fortunate in having a wealth of historic assets contained within a compact geographic area which spans across a broad range of styles, functions and periods with considerable untapped potential to deliver tangible economic, cultural and social benefits.

The Built Heritage at Risk Northern Ireland (BHARNI) project was first established in 1993 as a partnership between the Ulster Architectural Heritage Society (UAHS) and the then Environment and Heritage Service of the Department of the Environment succeeded by NIEA and now the Historic Environment Division (HED) of the Department for Communities. It was initially named the 'Buildings at Risk' (BAR), adapting its name to 'Built Heritage at Risk Northern Ireland' in 2006. From 2006 to 2016 there was a NI Government target to conserve and remove 200 buildings from the list. This target was almost achieved despite an economic downturn. This report was commissioned to consider the best way forward after this period of sustained effort.

**The BHARNI project, its register, the statistics and data it generates, act as a 'real time' indicator, both for the condition of individual assets and the identification of trends in the condition of the broad historic environment. It provides an important indication of how the condition of the historic environment relates to geographical areas, ownership and type, allowing us to identify opportunities, pressures and threats. Trends identified by the BHARNI register can help to direct individuals, groups, funders, and central and local government to target re-use, regeneration and repair works towards heritage need. It also serves to inform wider heritage policy and identify issues affecting heritage, which need to be addressed and prioritised.**

The objectives of BHARNI are:

- **To identify and record listed buildings and scheduled monuments which appear to be threatened.**
- **To act as a catalyst for the restoration and creative re-use of those buildings.**

Since 1972, following intense lobbying on the part of UAHS and others, with the, albeit belated, introduction of legislation for the protection of listed buildings, Northern Ireland has recognised the architectural, archaeological and/or historical significance of heritage. By applying designations to important and irreplaceable heritage assets: buildings, monuments, sites and Conservation Areas, Northern Ireland has laid down a commitment to the protection of our heritage. The Built Heritage at Risk Northern Ireland, (BHARNI) project and register has, for over 20 years, assessed the progress of this commitment by monitoring the condition of designated structures, primarily listed buildings and scheduled monuments. Using the register as a guide, UAHS, HED and the heritage sector has often been able to act to promote and encourage the re-use and regeneration of at risk heritage assets, before those assets and their associated social, cultural and benefit, is irretrievably lost.

The Northern Ireland Audit Office's (NIAO) report on '*Safeguarding Northern Ireland's Listed Buildings*', 2011 focused on the process and delivery for protection of Northern Ireland's Historic Buildings. It identified key areas for improvement in areas including: Survey of historic buildings, Historic Buildings Grant Scheme, Enforcement of listed buildings regulations and Quality of management information relating to listed buildings.

In the most recent comprehensive '*Study of the Economic Value of Northern Ireland's Historic Environment, Department of the Environment NI, 2012*', the historic environment was shown to generate an estimated £532 million annually and create and sustain approximately 10,000 jobs. These are figures that can be maintained and improved upon. The economic contribution of the historic environment per capita was estimated at £160 in Northern Ireland; £491 in the Republic of Ireland and £943 in Scotland. A comparison of Northern Ireland figures against other jurisdictions shows that there is opportunity to grow the contribution which the historic environment in Northern Ireland economically which in turn will provide important cultural and social benefit. Reuse and regeneration of at risk heritage assets is key to realising the historic environment's untapped cultural, social and economic potential.

The last official report on Built Heritage at Risk in Northern Ireland was provided by UAHS in association with the then Environment and Heritage Service, now HED, in 2000. Based on a conference of the same name, the report, 'SOS, Some Options & Solutions', recorded a total of 371 buildings at risk.

The 2000 report highlighted many of the key issues still relevant to heritage at risk today, including the importance of the legislative framework, the role of enforcement - Urgent Works and Repairs Notices, and ownership. It made the case that particular types of buildings presented particular need e.g. small scale vernacular, middle to large scale, and institutional and industrial buildings. It highlighted that the highest number of buildings at risk were houses and that the highest number were in County Down. This remains consistent with the report presented here, where Newry Mourne and Down is shown to have the highest number of listed buildings and the highest number of buildings at risk. At that time, the 2000 report, highlighted 139 'good news' stories in the project's first 7 years.

In recognition of the importance of targeted action for the historic environment and buildings at risk, a measurable objective was included in the Northern Ireland Programme for Government, (PfG) 2008-11. This set a target of 200 removals from the BHARNI register, between 2006-16. Almost achieving the target set, 192 buildings were removed from the BHARNI register during this period at a rate of approximately 20 buildings per year. Thus, a dedicated target within the Programme for Government 2018-11 fixed built heritage at risk, and the historic environment, firmly within the Northern Ireland agenda. It is unfortunate, in the light of previous successes, that no equivalent indicator or objective appears in the latest draft PfG 2016-20. UAHS and others in the sector are working on an ongoing basis with HED to address the lack of a dedicated indicator for the historic environment by way of sectoral PfG action plans, but, irrespective of this, the omission must still be viewed as both retrograde, illogical and potentially damaging.

It is important to note despite the welcome removal of 192 buildings at risk from the register between 2006-16, many heritage assets remain at risk and there is no room for complacency. Compared to 371 in 2000, the total number of buildings at risk in Northern Ireland has remained, consistently, at approximately 500 in recent years. This indicates an overall increase since 2000, more recently, a trend that, in effect, for every removal, another building is added that is at risk. The overall increase since 2000 may be due in part to progression of the BHARNI project and methodological changes to the ways in which 'risk' has been recorded, thus increasing additions made to the register at the earlier stages of the project, and, of course, the ever-present development pressure which is often seen to favour demolition over regeneration.

**This report aims to review the progress of BHARNI since 1993, with particular focus on the BHARNI project over the last 10 years, 2006-16 and comparison with the last comprehensive review in 2000. It considers opportunities for the BHARNI project within the current context of 2017. The BHARNI project to date is also considered against examples of other heritage at risk project models throughout the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland.**

**Our historic environment is designated in the public interest. Designations are there to acknowledge and protect architectural/archaeological and historic significance. Heritage assets which are designated in the public interest but subsequently over-looked either**

through absence or inadequacy of protection via a monitoring programme, in reality are not, and will not be protected and consequently the resource expended in the process of individual designation is effectively wasted, and outside of the recording function, rendered pointless.

For almost 25 years the BHARNI project has addressed the both implied and logical need, on the back of the legislative requirement, to oversee, on a rolling basis, the welfare, or condition of the historic built environment. A role not integrated into either local authority or HED stand alone procedures. On the clear need and responsibility to back up legislative imperatives with the ongoing vigilance which validates the valuable efforts of the responsible Department, it is essential that the BHARNI project continues to play a key role in the management of Northern Ireland's heritage. In addition, the BHARNI initiative goes much further in delivery than the baseline partnership with government requirement. The register acts to independently profile the buildings and structures most in need in Northern Ireland and to help source and direct funding accordingly. The project actively highlights need for action to save some of our most important buildings, and subsequent success stories associated with action taken to save buildings at risk.

Led by an NGO, in partnership with HED, the register is deemed to be independent, separate from government, private, or commercial interests, and able to act as a long-established, accredited, trusted and impartial guide to HED, Heritage Lottery Fund, Architectural Heritage Fund, local authorities and others, not least for prioritisation of funding. With regard to roles associated with the management of buildings at risk in Northern Ireland, it is clear that the transfer of planning to local authority and associated redistribution of powers following Reform of Public Administration, (RPA), necessitates a change in the way that the BHARNI project will operate in the future in its relationships between the NGO, central and local government.

The reform of local government presents new opportunities for local authorities to take lead roles on their local historic environment, and changed roles in which NGOs and central government can act to prioritise heritage at risk. UAHS remains concerned that these opportunities may not yet have been fully appreciated or acted upon and that it is of great importance that good relations and process are established as a matter of urgency. With appropriate resource and guidance, Northern Ireland's new 11 local authorities have the potential to use their new responsibilities in planning, enforcement, community and local development planning to make a real difference for buildings at risk, with measurable economic and regenerative benefit to their local authority areas. Indeed, going forward, UAHS sees the 11 local authorities as a potential 'third' partner entity, with HED and UAHS and/or, other partner, in the BHARNI project.

The recommendations set out in section 4 aim to best help Northern Ireland in the commitment to monitor, protect and care for Northern Ireland's heritage, and may be taken to better position the BHARNI project within a new, and in some respects, more complex, context of local and central government and the draft Programme for Government, (PfG), 2016-21.

## 2. AIMS & OBJECTIVES:

The aims of the Built Heritage at Risk Northern Ireland (BHARNI) project are:

- **To identify and record listed buildings and scheduled monuments which appear to be threatened.**
- **To act as a catalyst for the restoration and creative re-use of those buildings.**

The BHARNI register provides an indication of the overall state of Northern Ireland's Built Heritage. Monitoring trends in the register can help to inform wider heritage policy and identify any potential issues affecting heritage, which need to be addressed.

The BHARNI project, delivers these aims by way of the following objectives:

- **Raising awareness of the condition and vulnerability of many designated heritage assets, i.e. listed buildings and scheduled monuments;**
- **Promoting the potential for Heritage at Risk to play an important role in enhancing our built environment and as a focus for communities;**
- **Communicating the underlying problems that have brought about the poor condition of these buildings;**
- **Taking action in the case of those buildings identified as being of the highest levels of risk;**
- **Promoting the need for action by others so as to stave off decay in the buildings at risk identified in the register;**
- **Encouraging the repair, reuse and where appropriate, restoration, of buildings identified in this register as being at risk through neglect and decay.**

These aims and objectives remain essential, and are not proposed for change. This report reviews the above aims and objectives for the BHARNI project, in the current operating context, and the challenges for the historic environment in 2018 and beyond, taking into account reconsideration of the role of NGO, HED, local authorities and owners in the context of the evolving public administration revisions.



### 3. SUMMARY:

This summary and recommendations in section 4, are, in turn based on sections 5-7, a background to the BHARNI project, a review of BHARNI headline statistics against key factors 2006-16, and a comparison of the Northern Ireland Heritage at Risk initiative against those active in the rest of the UK and Ireland.

To summarise, it is proposed that HED, local Authorities and NGOs work to:

**Develop and enhance the established BHARNI heritage at risk project, building on the base of the existing project, retaining the HED and NGO partnership and expanding to include local authorities. Retaining the two established key objectives:**

- *To identify and record listed buildings and scheduled monuments which appear to be threatened.*
- *To act as a catalyst for the restoration and creative re-use of those buildings.*

**Update the current operating framework of the agreement to work in 2018/19 context, across the project aims: Raising awareness, promoting potential, communicating problems, taking action, promoting the need for action, encouraging repair, re-use and restoration of built heritage at risk. To include recommendations 1-9 (R1-9):**

1. **The systematic, cyclical survey of all listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled monuments in Northern Ireland. Including systematic analysis of 'saved', and 'lost' as well as 'at risk' assets;**
2. **Addition of scheduled monuments, sites and conservation areas to the Heritage at Risk Register;**
3. **Heritage at Risk Public Access Portal and Online Toolkit;**
4. **Targeted activity towards: Heritage Action Types, Areas and Owners;**
5. **Amendment of partnership arrangement to include HED, NGO and Local Authorities;**
6. **Priority funding streams for maintenance, repair and regeneration projects sourced from both central and local government and other sources; 'spreading the load'**
7. **Change of Name: 'Built Heritage at Risk Northern Ireland, (BHARNI)' to 'Heritage at Risk Northern Ireland, (HARNI)';**
8. **Integrate Heritage at Risk Register into a larger Heritage Index for Northern Ireland;**
9. **Evaluate adequate funding and resource levels for the Heritage at Risk Project in order to facilitate items 3-9 and to assure and maximise the benefit/value/results from available funds.**



## Key Points:

- Research into the 24 year history of the BHARNI partnership demonstrates a proactive approach to the issue of built heritage at risk in Northern Ireland by HED, its predecessors, and their partner organisation, UAHS;
- The long-standing partnership between UAHS and government is regarded by both HED and UAHS as being a mutually positive and productive arrangement. The project has produced a maintained 'known' register and provided regular, direct support and advice, guidance, conferences, 8 Buildings at Risk catalogues, a Directory of Traditional Building Skills and a Directory of Funding. UAHS has annually participated in European Heritage Open Days (EHOD) to profile Built Heritage at Risk and, most recently partnered with HED to profile Northern Ireland's Heritage Heroes through EHOD;
- UAHS, as an independent, not for profit charitable organisation with a 50 year track record and expertise. The Society has been able to deliver a fair, impartial and very cost effective assessment of Built Heritage at Risk to HED, led by qualified staff and volunteers with expertise in architecture, archaeology and planning. This is in tandem with working directly in consultation with HED officials, who provide expert support for the project from the Department's perspective;
- UAHS also delivers additional, complementary activity to promote the historic environment through a regular programme of events and other funded projects. Examples include, the 'Home & Dry' Skills and Maintenance series 2001-2012, 'Lose or Re-Use' publication, 2007, more recently, 'Mournes & Me: Built Heritage Education', 2016, 'Maintain to Retain' seminars, 2017, 'Conservation Without Frontiers' Summer Schools in 2015 and 2017, and the recent introduction of the Andrew Lloyd Webber, 'Heritage Angel Awards' to Northern Ireland in 2017/18/19 of which UAH is the lead partner and deliverer;
- UAHS has, as a membership organisation, provided a circa 1000 strong network of direct contacts, and a 4000 online following, connecting with owners individuals and groups across Northern Ireland to promote the BHARNI project, and its associated activities. UAHS also contributes monthly articles profiling built heritage at risk in RSUA's Perspective Magazine and maintains an established 'go to' reputation within the mainstream local media;
- UAHS has also complemented the project via the high level of volunteer time, including the expert input of the UAHS committee, many of whom have led, or are leading on, projects relating to the re-use and regeneration of historic buildings, including some on the BHARNI register. Collectively, UAHS committee members are, or have been, actively involved in process relating to the rescue of over 120 buildings. The practical expertise of the Committee, has added greatly to the outcome of the BHARNI Agreement. In many ways this goes beyond monetary value, but should always be quantified when aspiring to best value as representing a significant benefit to HED in partnering with UAHS, an NGO. Such arrangements are recognised and well established practice in many other areas such as natural environment and nature and wildlife conservation, both in NI and administrations in the UK and across the world.
- The preceding points support the recommendation that HED continues to work with UAHS, or other entity which could offer an equivalent level of best value to the heritage at risk project;
- This report recognises the value of 24+ years of the BHARNI project. It also recognises that contexts and circumstances have changed considerably since the original 1993 agreement and its 2006 updated form. It is proposed that the operating framework of the

heritage at risk project should change to best fit with legislative framework, current context of central and local government reform, and public engagement within an advanced digital, technologically orientated Northern Ireland;

- It is proposed that the two main objectives of the BHARNI Agreement 2006-16, remain of key relevance to the promotion and protection of built heritage at risk, and should remain. Recommendations to update the operating framework of the project, based on these two objectives, are as follows:

## 4. : RECOMMENDATIONS 1-9 (R1-9)

### R1. Systematic, cyclical survey of all listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled monuments in Northern Ireland. Including systematic analysis of 'saved', 'lost' and 'at risk' assets

Systematic, cyclical survey of all designated heritage assets- to include, based on currently available figures: the 8702 listed buildings, 1875 scheduled monuments and 66 conservation areas. Identification of all 'at risk' structures within these categories in a new X (TBA) year cycle.

This survey should include at minimum, in relatively simple tabular form, cyclically updated condition assessment and photographs, audit of use, ownership, of all listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled monuments. For those with 'at risk' status, progress towards and options for re-use would be reported, on an agreed X (TBA) yearly basis. At risk structures that are saved would also be reported on, as necessary, recording before and after photos, how the project was delivered e.g. transfer of use and ownership, (if any), funding required, resultant income, employment, etc. and the information actively and extensively promoted as 'good news'.

There are clear synergies and cost benefits in linking with the further recommendations listed below: R3: Addition of scheduled monuments and conservation areas to the Heritage at Risk Register, R4: Heritage at Risk Public Access Portal and R9: Heritage Index for Northern Ireland.

#### Key Points:

- The Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) report of 2011 recommended that the Department *'builds on its procedures for the current contract (for the second survey) by formally prioritising for survey those buildings that are most at risk'*. To date formal procedures for this have not been identified.
- Currently, however, the BHARNI register has been commissioned on a system of **'known'** condition of heritage assets and **not** a systematic, cyclical survey. Research for this report highlights that systematic, cyclical surveys, utilising various formats, do exist in England, Scotland and Wales;
- Research for this report has considered the 'Ecory/Alistair Coey Architects Baseline Survey of the Condition of Listed Buildings 2013-14', commissioned by the DoE in 2013. The Ecory/Alistair Coey report recorded the proportion of Northern Ireland's listed buildings in poor/very poor condition to be 21.5% of the approx. 8500 listed building stock, equating to over 1700. In the same report, 30.8% were recorded to be at some form of risk, and this equates to over 2600. These figures contrast with the total number of buildings on the BHARNI register, (excluding monuments);
- The difference in statistics between the 2013-14 report and the BHARNI register could be due to a difference in survey method and categorisation. However, it could also indicate that there may be listed buildings that should be on the register, but have not yet been identified or added by way of current process. This disparity supports the need to move away from a system of 'known at some point in the past' towards a regular, comprehensive review of all listed buildings in Northern Ireland. It also suggests that, in terms of best value such

standalone reports should not be commissioned outside but should be integrated into the BHARNI project with the periodic Audit report acting as the arbiter of progress.

- The 'Second Survey of Listed Buildings in Northern Ireland' could, in theory, include condition and 'at risk' assessment of buildings. However, the NIAO, Auditor General's Report, 2016, highlighted the status of the survey as being significantly behind schedule. It cannot, therefore be assumed that the second survey will act quickly enough to readdress the balance between the existing 'known' BHARNI survey without the implied potential for consequent loss of asset. This reinforces need for separate systematic and cyclical condition and 'risk assessment to be established;
  - The lack of accurate, up to date and systematic assessment of the state of designated heritage assets in Northern Ireland may indicate an ongoing inability or indeed complacency on the part of central government, local government (and UAHS, as provider and advocate), to adequately monitor, report and act to protect the historic environment in Northern Ireland.
  - It is acknowledged that lack of systematic or cyclical survey for BHARNI and apparent inability to readdress balances in existing delivery methods such as the Second Survey, is substantially due to the current low level of funding streams which do not reflect the widely acknowledged added value of the historic environment to the economy. This continues to be perplexing, given that there is ample evidence that the comparatively modest sums required annually, deliver lasting multifaceted benefits far exceeding the outlay. (Refer to Section 1: Introduction.)
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## **R2. Addition of scheduled monuments and conservation areas to the Heritage at Risk Register**

**Future Heritage at Risk Project for Northern Ireland should aim to give the most comprehensive record possible of all historic assets at risk in the historic environment, to include all designations: i.e. listed buildings, scheduled monuments, and conservation areas.**

### **Key Points:**

- The condition of conservation areas is an important indicator for the care and protection of the historic environment. Research carried out for this report has established that all other UK regions include conservation areas in their 'heritage at risk' register;
- The designation of Conservation Areas now lies within the remit of local authorities, rather than the Department. The CA designation acknowledges the architectural and historical significance of complete areas within the historic environment. It is important to also monitor the effectiveness of these designations in a similar way to those relating to listed buildings and scheduled monuments. It is highly unlikely that Local Authorities will be able to dedicate year on year funding to 'in house' monitoring of conservation areas;
- To date regeneration and restoration of conservation areas has been largely centred on the Heritage Lottery Fund Townscape Heritage Initiatives. In the same way that the BHARNI project can profile and benefit individual listed buildings, the addition of conservation areas to the BHARNI register, and analysis of associated trends, may help individuals, groups, funders and central and local government to target re-use and regeneration initiatives towards towns and villages that have the most heritage investment need;

- In 2005 a commitment was made to include archaeology, particularly scheduled monuments on the then Buildings at Risk Northern Ireland (BARNI) database. In 2005, the name of the register was adapted to 'Built **Heritage** at Risk Northern Ireland' to reflect this change. To date this change has only been integrated in part, with only 30 scheduled monuments added. This commitment has not been fully realised due to the ongoing resource implications and the lack of a coherent plan for the practical integration of entries from existing surveys, outlined below;
- Monitoring of the condition of monuments is currently undertaken on an ongoing basis by three, part-time field monument wardens under the direction of HED. It is proposed that a transferable format for reporting monuments at risk to the BHARNI register from HED field monument wardens be set up and fully integrated, again adding value by utilising established HED resource to provide a register representative of the full spectrum of Northern Ireland's historic environment;
- A report on 'The Condition and Management Survey of Archaeological Resource in Northern Ireland' (CAMSAR), 2004-6, by Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork, Queens University Belfast, was the first scientifically based record of its kind for monuments in Northern Ireland. It aimed to provide a baseline against which to measure future change of our historic sites and monuments, and the basis for future monitoring and advisory work by HED (then NIEA, DoE). It was proposed that the report should be updated and re-written in 2014. To date this has not been possible to deliver .

### **R3. Heritage at Risk Public Engagement, Access Portal and Online Toolkit**

#### **Update/renew online public portal to include:**

- **Headline statistics: Total BAR, total added, total saved, total demolished/historic value lost;**
- **Up-to-date information and condition of each entry with up to date photos;**
- **Targeted sections on 'featured building', 'success stories', 'in progress';**
- **Map, powered by Arc GIS linked to the HED Map Viewer, broken down into local authority, data easily accessible and retrievable directly from the portal e.g. to excel.**

**Develop an online toolkit, linking through to, possibly incorporating, and building on existing BHARNI Directory of Traditional Building Skills and Directory of Funds to include such information as:**

- **duties & responsibilities,**
- **legislative context & powers,**
- **surveys & monitoring,**
- **maintenance,**
- **good conservation practice,**
- **ownership,**
- **case studies.**

#### **Key Points:**

- The 2011 NIAO report highlighted that with regard to the '*Quality and Management of Information*', '*the limited functionality of the online Built Heritage at Risk Register undermines its potential usefulness as a basis for ranking listed structures in order of importance or vulnerability, or targeting action for rescuing them*'. The online Built Heritage at Risk Register

user interface and functionality remains largely the same as in 2011. With the updates and recommendations from the NIAO report, and their associated benefits outstanding;

- The ability for an enhanced BHARNI register, to inform and incentivise the public through provision of information on 'at risk' heritage assets is the essential starting point in acting as a catalyst for participation in the re-use and regeneration of the historic environment. The 'at risk' status of a building and useful, up-to-date information needs to be readily accessible. Public engagement has to date been centred on telephone/face to face contacts, talks and conferences and publication formerly with the emphasis on print media, with movement more recently towards digital and online, through UAHS portals;
  - It is of utmost importance that a building at risk, its importance and potential for reuse is profiled sufficiently by the BHARNI project. It is necessary not only to record but to reach out to link buildings to owners. The most efficient and cost effective way to do this is now by progressive, online solutions. Online platforms that can be updated, adapted and changed as entries, case studies or guidance notes are added;
  - The 8 BHARNI printed catalogues 1993-2005, were key in profiling buildings at risk and saves. Often referred to within the heritage sector as 'match-makers' between buildings at risk and potential owners and the wider public. Publication of a new volume of the BHARNI was planned by the previous agreement for 2015. This was put on hold due to restrictions on funding and resources.
  - The existing public access portal is hosted by HED and shared through a link to the UAHS website. An updated, unified, public access portal would provide more up to date information on individual entries, and headline statistics, stories of featured buildings, progress towards re-use and saves and would serve as an online replacement and future archive resource for the printed BHARNI catalogue. This platform should link to the excellent HED Map Viewer and Geographical Information Systems, (GIS). Models for this type of online platform have been developed by Historic Environment Scotland and Historic England;
  - The provision of 'up-to-date' information, condition status and photographs would be provided for this online resource regularly through implementation of **R1: Systematic, Cyclical Survey**. The regular dissemination of information to the website or by any other means, will be dependent on the provision of up to date content management systems upon which to manage and update the register. Compatibility of systems across government departments remains the optimal aspiration;
  - UAHS are working to develop a Heritage Recording and Reporting App, which could, following a period of field testing and refinement, be incorporated into such an online platform. This could incorporate fields for the BHARNI register, subject to agreement. This project was 'seed' funded by Big Lottery;
  - In terms of guidance, UAHS Directory of Traditional Building Skills and the UAHS Directory of Funds, previously only available in print, have both been transferred online to the UAHS website. Online provision cannot be seen to replace all essential 'one to one' guidance, but user-friendly online toolkits are seen to be a cost effective and efficient way of providing essential baseline support. A model for this type of online toolkit has been developed by Historic Environment Scotland.
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#### R4. Heritage Action: Types/Areas/Owners/Campaigns

The renewed Heritage at Risk project should provide outreach, guidance and relevant research focused on the following themes:

Heritage Action Types: target types e.g. thatch, vernacular, gate lodges, industrial buildings, churches;

Heritage Action Areas: target geographical areas of high numbers of BAR, areas of potential regeneration through HAR, linking to local authority areas and local development/community plans;

Heritage Action Owners: e.g. private owners (61%), e.g. repair & maintenance; heritage trusts, housing associations e.g. transfer of heritage assets at risk;

Heritage Action Campaigns: Lead targeted campaigns on issues affecting heritage at risk e.g. Fiscal incentives, Rates, VAT, Heritage Crime, funding.

#### Key Points:

- The NIAO report in 2011, recommended that the Department *'engages more proactively with owners, to encourage them to improve their properties and, if relevant, to avail of grant aid'*. Outreach activity, including direct contact with groups and owners has been largely curtailed by cuts to the BHARNI project in 2015. Numbers of 'saves' have dropped in the same period;
- Activity for the BHARNI project, out-with maintaining the 'known' condition of buildings on the database, has largely been curtailed since 2015 due to a budget cut that halved the provision from central government. Since 2015, UAHS has not been in the position to provide previously delivered levels of action and leadership through the BHARNI project. Working directly with owners has also had to be curtailed, with UAHS only being resourced to provide baseline advice and support. Associated, separately funded, activities relating to the care of the historic environment adding value, as has historically been the case;
- HED resource for BHARNI has also been reduced during this period. The Listed Building Owners Forum, programmed by DoE/HED, with contributions by UAHS has also not been held since 2014;
- Heritage Action will actively target activity relating to heritage at risk by type, owners, areas and campaigns. The BHARNI register acts as an important indicator to demonstrate trends in the individual and overall condition of the historic environment in Northern Ireland. An NGO, HED and local authorities acting upon, and leading on, key areas of need, in day to day operations, is key to encouraging and enabling re-use and heritage regeneration of our buildings at risk, unleashing their economic and social potential;
- Heritage Action builds on the newly introduced Architectural Heritage Fund project, funded by HEF 2016-18, that prioritise heritage trusts, social enterprise and heritage asset transfer. While this report welcomes the AHF project it is acknowledged will not target other key areas highlighted in the statistical analysis of this report: private owners, priority types, priority geographical areas, and key campaigns;
- No individual group- NGO/central or local government can alone address issues surrounding heritage at risk. Heritage Action will bring together: owners, NGO, local and central government, as necessary, to find the best, most helpful and proactive solutions for dealing with buildings at risk. Heritage Action may include provision of forums, conferences, guidance, or research, depending on the identified trend and need;



- With regard to **'Heritage Action Owners'**, there might be investigation into how policy can be utilized to help and encourage 'supportive' owners and to deter unsympathetic owners, who sometimes will have acquired a building purely for a perceived site development value, from ignoring further dereliction of their properties through neglect and in some instances, heritage crime. (see, for example, 'Rates Exemption'. Section 7 page 36 of the report) This will require clear, cross departmental, understanding of the barriers to effective protection of these buildings. In 2008, DoE undertook to issue warning letters to owners, encouraging them to apply for available grants in order to save the buildings or to put them structures on the market to allow new owner to take on the building. This corresponds with the highest recorded level of removal of buildings from the register during the 2006-16 period suggesting that such initiatives may have an important impact;
  - With regard to **'Heritage Action Types'**, in 2016, UAHS led a pilot project, bringing together the National Trust, Historic Buildings Council and HED to target the issue of thatch as a priority type. This pilot consisted of regular meetings/forums with thatch owners, thatchers and specialists in vernacular construction methods. The idea being that such target groups could work together to understand issues, and bring forward solutions. This was with a view to taking action and seeking wider support for the issue from NGO, local and central government. A range of proposals emerged from this pilot. However, implementation depended on dedicated resource to administrate, fundraise and lead on proposals. UAHS did not have the resource to seek new support for this initiative under current capacity. As a consequence, this important initiative had to be put on hold by UAHS. It is suggested that such 'Heritage Action' projects, adequately resourced could lead to better, targeted action for buildings at risk, including funded projects;
  - This recommendation is with reference to, but not in duplication of, an existing model of 'Heritage Action Zones', already established by Historic England.
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#### **R5. Extension of BHARNI partnership arrangement to include Local Authorities**

It is proposed that an HED-NGO central resource, should work with Northern Ireland's 11 local authorities, through the BHARNI project, to help maximise the impact that local authorities can achieve for the historic environment in the exercise of their recently acquired responsibilities of planning, enforcement, and the preparation and operation of community and local development plans.

The central HED-NGO resource, would manage recommendations R1-R4, i.e. the maintenance of the register, managing systematic survey, developing and maintaining database, developing online portal, toolkit and heritage action: i.e. format, areas, owners, campaigns etc.

Ideally HED and/or the NGO will work directly with all the 11 local authorities to actively connect with buildings, owners, funders, people and communities at local level. If possible, designated local authority staff or heritage officers would connect the project to a local framework, for example, feeding into monitoring using supplied tools and integrated databases where appropriate, together with the bespoke outreach dissemination of recommended 'heritage action' topics to owners, directly.

In less straitened times full time council officers might have been funded across NI by HED in partnership with local authorities. As a model this would be exemplified by the HED - Derry City & Strabane District Council (DCSDC) pilot, funded by Historic Environment Fund, 2016-18. It is acknowledged, this is unlikely to lead to the rolling out of a year on year funded NI wide programme in the foreseeable future so an alternative method of delivery of objectives at best available value must be found.

## Key Points:

- Maintaining a central register is consistent with England Scotland and particularly the Welsh approach, one that has seen management of their heritage at risk register come in from local authorities to a centralised resource;
- The Reform of Public Administration, implemented in April 2015 introduced a more significant role for Northern Ireland's local authorities in the care of our historic environment. Particularly through the newly acquired responsibilities for planning and community and local development plans, the potential for local listing, enforcement and, importantly, the post completion monitoring of conditions attached to Listed Building Consent and Conservation Area planning approvals ;
- It is important to emphasise that consistent, even handed application of enforcement as a deterrent (e.g. through the medium of initially, owner information and dialogue, followed if necessary by the implementation of the various statutory instruments: i.e. Urgent Repair Notices, Building Preservation Notices), is a key component of protecting buildings at risk. However, this cannot be effective in the absence of staff, expertise and a commitment of officers and elected members to the value of their historic environment, coupled with sufficient funding resource both to and from local authorities. However, councillors and staff currently appear to feel that the application of their available legislation is so fraught with potential pitfalls and perceived unjustifiable expense, as to be largely ineffectual. This remains a serious problem exacerbated with every failure to test their powers. Anecdotally there is considerable frustration within local authorities when they appear to the public to be powerless to act in the face of sometimes blatant destruction of their locally and nationally important heritage assets;
- In addition, and this is a very important consideration, this can lead to an entirely unjustified, but nonetheless entrenched perception on the part of some members of the public and, to an extent, some elected representatives, that any authority or body exercising any control or regulation over the historic environment be regarded as 'the enemy', of progress, personal freedoms or whatever may be popular on the day. In simple terms, there is a considerable public relations and education mountain to climb, and given the current under-resourced, and arguably of necessity, 'scatter gun' approach, in the absence of an affordable integrated approach such as we propose, it is difficult to see how the situation can improve;
- A commitment from all 11 local authorities to jointly partner with a restructured BHARNI project would go some way to address the apparent deficiency of action for buildings at risk at local level. This might for example, include agreed standard delivery by the NGO to include information provision, contacts, capacity building for people and communities, officers and elected members to an agreed annual level per local authority. It might also include a designated part of the aforementioned online portal and associated tools for each local authority;
- It is proposed that if each of the 11 local authorities made an affordable and in relative terms, modest annual contribution towards this element of the BHARNI project, it would improve capacity and therefore delivery for the protection of the historic environment at local level across Northern Ireland at a genuinely best value. If the 11 councils were to agree a standard format for what is required, a productive partnership arrangement could be agreed at a low relative cost to each measured against returns;
- The lead role of local authorities in the protection of historic environment, and therefore buildings at risk, is perhaps better established in neighbouring jurisdictions where the relevant structures of local government have been in existence for many years. A model of central government/arms-length teams, working with heritage officers and conservation officers at

local authority level, is operated by the Heritage Council in the Republic of Ireland and Historic England, with Scotland and Wales also working closely with local authorities to achieve their aims;

- With regard to enforcement, research for this report also highlighted bespoke resource provision from Historic England to local authorities in the form of legal advice and funding for underwriting action in the courts. If enforcement does not act as a deterrent, for whatever reason, the entire principle of protecting the national heritage asset falls prey to opportunism and brinkmanship. It would be beneficial to see this type of incentive flow from central to local government also in Northern Ireland, should future resource allow. As a meantime approach a commitment to fund a small number of selected 'test cases' to maintain the deterrent in parallel with the necessary associated 'hearts and minds' publicity would be of significant ongoing value.
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#### **R6. Priority and additional funding for maintenance, repair and regeneration of heritage at risk;**

**Provide sufficient levels of capital funding for maintenance, repair and regeneration of listed buildings. A figure of £3-4 million per annum, as per pre 2015, was and remains a necessity. The requirement can be related to the recorded drop in the number of assets saved during the ongoing period of absence of sufficient levels of funding, highlighted by this report.**

**Future funding should be targeted to deliver on mostly smaller projects in order to achieve the optimum benefit of community regeneration spread across NI. Larger projects would be encouraged to seek funding from various other sources, as already happens occasionally. Focus provision of funding for built heritage at risk, priority types, such as thatch, priority owners, such as private owners (61%), and priority areas, such as Newry Mourne & Down (local authority with highest number of listed buildings and highest number of buildings at risk), in any allocation of funding from HED or other. Identify and promote other sources of funding for those buildings not in private ownership e.g. other funders, community shares, community enterprise, etc.**

#### **Key Points:**

- It is widely acknowledged that many owners of listed buildings face financial challenge in raising the capital to cover the deficit in maintaining and restoring our historic assets according to legislative requirements. A challenge commonly referred to as '*heritage deficit*';
- Until 2015, 'Listed Building Grant Aid', from the DoE, provided funding for eligible works on listed buildings at up to 45%, to a value of £500,000 per building, where applicable. A total value of £4.6 million was provided by central government for Listed Building Grant Aid, 2014-15. Listed Building Grant Aid was suspended in 2015;
- In 2016-17, HED through the Historic Environment Fund, was able to make available a welcome, but significantly reduced level of funding at £500,000 in total with 'at risk' and thatched as priority categories. £500,000, the allocation which historically might have been afforded to a single building, is now proposed to cover demand from over 8,500 listed buildings. The HEF 2016-17 was heavily oversubscribed;
- Grant aid, now the Historic Environment Fund (HEF), supports owners. For many, such grant aid is the sole financial support that owners could access to maintain their listed building. This

is particularly relevant to private owners (61%) who, without charitable status, cannot avail of a majority of public funding e.g. HLF;

- For those who can avail of other sources of funding, Historic Environment Fund, (HEF), may be regarded as a source of match funding, thus encouraging the support of other funders for the progression of key regeneration projects;
- The provision of grant aid makes economic sense for Northern Ireland. For every £1 of listed building grant, £7.65 is leveraged from other sources, (DoE, 2012);
- Oversubscription to HED's new Historic Environment Fund (HEF), in 2016, reflects important appetite and need for the repair and regeneration of heritage assets, including heritage at risk. Oversubscription also highlights insufficiencies in the required levels funding to deal with requirements. It would be unfortunate if lack of sufficient levels of central government funding, for practical repair and regeneration, and associated match leverage, hampered the potential for buildings to be removed from the heritage at risk register. This is particularly relevant to the 61% of built heritage at risk stock in private ownership.

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**R7. Change of Name: 'Built Heritage at Risk Northern Ireland, (BHARNI)' to 'Heritage at Risk Northern Ireland, (HARNI)'**

UAHS proposes to remove the word 'built' from the BHARNI title to relaunch the heritage at risk project for Northern Ireland as 'Heritage at Risk Northern Ireland', (HARNI).

Update all branded items from NIEA, Department of the Environment to Department for Communities, Historic Environment Division. Include up to date NGO branding, and local authority branding as required. Introduce a shared 'Heritage at Risk' partnership logo to be used by NGO, HED and local authorities if applicable, as agreed.

**Key Points:**

- This report recommends an update to the existing operating framework of the BHARNI project. This renewal, and the potential addition of local authorities as a third partner entity, should be reflected in the identity and branding of the project, whether by title and/or branding, as agreed. Representing a relaunch of the project identity as well as its operational format;
  - Parts of the existing branding continue to carry the NIEA Department of the Environment logo following the transfer of HED to Department for Communities pending decisions on the future of the project. Both UAHS and HED have or will change branding elements in 2017. It is recommended that the BHARNI project is retitled and rebranding is carried out in conjunction with planned or recently implemented changes to the lead brand/s. It will also be necessary to integrate the branding of other partner/s, as appropriate.
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#### **R8. Integrate Heritage at Risk Register into a larger Heritage Index for Northern Ireland**

Integrate the BHARNI data, as described in items 1-7, above, into a larger heritage index, or 'Heritage Counts' initiative for Northern Ireland. Profile BHARNI data within a wider body of research and statistics produced annually to help better understand the historic environment, successes and the challenges it faces.

For example, numbers and distribution of:

- Designated Assets by:
  - Type
  - Ownership
  - Use- private/public (by type: tourism use, community use);
- Capital investment in the historic built environment;
- Income per annum in the historic built environment;
- Visitor numbers/time spent at historic places;
- Job numbers created at historic places;
- Volunteer numbers/time invested in historic places;
- School visits/project numbers either classroom based or onsite projects based at/focused on historic places;
- Community event/project numbers targeted heritage events/projects and non-heritage community projects/events located at historic buildings/sites;
- Number of strategic partnerships with third sector community and heritage organisations;
- Total number of structures on the BHARNI register;
- Number of structures added to the BHARNI register;
- Number of structures removed from the BHARNI register;
- Number of planning/enforcement actions for the protection of the historic environment at local and central government level.

#### **Key Points:**

- The case for saving buildings, or indeed caring for them generally needs to be explained in clear terms, if we are to be able to make the case for buildings at risk, or indeed any initiative to protect or care for our heritage assets. This, up to date, annual/biannual data is now urgently necessary to make a rolling consistent case, and not isolated or outdated one off prioritisation of the historic environment at central government level;
- The index should provide useful, interpretable data that is better planned, consistent and robust than standalone reports. Built heritage at risk and other statistics, within the index should be monitored, as agreed, and reported on annually/biannually. The BHARNI project should sit within such a body of research, so that the sector and central government policy making apparatus is able to quantify the economic and social and impact of caring for our historic environment, alongside the physical, regenerative impact of saving buildings at risk;
- The Built Heritage at Risk Register is a key indicator of progress against the commitment to care for and protect the historic environment. However, it is not the only data that should be considered. 'At risk' information could sit within a wider body of research and statistics produced annually to help better understand the historic environment, its successes and the challenges it faces;

- The 2012, 'Study of the Economic Value of Northern Ireland's Historic Environment' (DoE) report and its statistics continue to form the basis of important arguments for the care and protection of the historic environment in 2016. The value of this and other reports may diminish, as time renders them out of date;
- It is only by looking at the up to date, economic, cultural and social value of the historic environment, and the progress or challenges it faces, that we have the context to make a robust case for built heritage at risk;
- The recommendation for a heritage index for Northern Ireland is particularly important with reference to Programme for Government, 2016-21, indicator 40: 'Improve our international reputation' and proposed 'National Brand Index'. As an international comparator, a country's assessment is usually carried out independently by 'Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index'. This aids governments, organizations and businesses to understand, measure and ultimately build a strong national image and reputation. One of its six dimensions is 'Culture and Heritage: global perceptions of a nation's heritage', including assessment of cultural history and heritage and the historic built environment. <http://nation-brands.gfk.com/>;
- In the Northern Ireland context, where so much now appears to turn on the promotion of the 'two cultural traditions' it is inexplicable that the most tangible, durable, (and irreplaceable) pillar of our shared culture, as expressed in our remaining built heritage, still receives such little recognition and support from the Stormont administration.
- With reference to Historic England's 'Heritage Counts' initiative, building upon RSA's UK wide heritage index, funded by HLF. It is proposed that delivery of such an index would most efficiently sit with the heritage at risk project.

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**R9. Adequate funding and resource for the Heritage at Risk Project in order to facilitate items 1-9**

This report proposes that the operating framework of the heritage at risk project should change to best fit with the legislative framework and the current context of central and local government reform and public engagement within an advanced digital, technologically orientated Northern Ireland, according to recommendations R1-R8, above. UAHS believes that implementation of these recommendations is essential for the best care and protection of Northern Ireland's Historic Environment. However, UAHS acknowledges that recommendations must be weighed against the practicalities of provision of funding in the current climate. UAHS can provide an appraisal of the options ranging from 'do nothing' to scaling through the various funding scenarios. This would necessitate consultation with HED, local authorities and others, and depend on UAHS being allocated adequate resource to deliver.

It is however, evident that funding and resource required to achieve a basic operational framework will be significantly higher than is currently afforded to HED and UAHS. This is out-with one off costs e.g. updating Public Access Portal including Online Toolkit, update to branding, etc.

A basic operational framework may be presented as follows:

- Full time NGO staff x 2, for Objective 1: Recording through recommendation R2-R4, systematic cyclical survey and addition of conservation areas and monuments;

- Full time NGO staff x 1-2, working on Objective 2: Catalyst Activity recommendations, public access portal, toolkit, heritage action types, areas, owners, campaigns and local authority contact and guidance, as agreed;
- Equipment;
- Expenses;
- Accommodation;
- Administration, etc.

It is therefore estimated that a minimum of 2 and maximum of 5 staff (including admin and management) would be required for the proper delivery of all above recommendations for a heritage at risk project with at least one staff member for each of the 2 main project objectives. Level of staffing would be dependent on the recommendations adopted, and rate/timetabling of delivery and actual and notional benefit value. Local authority allocation should be added according to an agreed partnership arrangement, as outlined in recommendation 5. It is also proposed that the HED/Local Authority staff allocation increases proportionally, to assist the NGO led staff from the Departmental level. This basic operational framework is dependent on availability of required resources and associated funding.

#### Key Points:

- In 2006, the previous BHARNI Agreement was based on an annual allocation of £60,000 to UAHS. Since 2006, this has incrementally reduced to £20,000 for 2016-17. This reflects an approximate reduction of close to 70% taking into account additional factors, and is attributed to wider cuts to central government in 2015;
- Since 2015, £20,000 per annum has supported one part-time UAHS member of staff at 15 hours per week, within this reduced allocation, UAHS works extremely efficiently to a target based recording/review of over 25 buildings per month, input into database, provision of baseline information to local authorities, response to enquiries and bi-monthly articles in Perspective Magazine, (as part of a separate agreement between UAHS and the publisher). However, reductions in funding have limited monitoring, outreach and contact with owners, response to enquiries and progress on a new BHARNI Catalogue. It has also limited capacity to give productive assistance to local authorities, at a time when this would have been most productive, the early stages of establishment of local government reform;
- The UAHS part-time input is supported by part-time input of one HED Architect, from the Heritage Regulation & Change Branch. Area Architects and Planning staff at HED also refer queries directly to UAHS;
- To change the operating framework of the Heritage at Risk project to best fit with the legislative framework, current context of central and local government reform, and public engagement within an advanced digital, technologically orientated Northern Ireland, the current provision of resource and funding must increase significantly. Otherwise, HED together with UAHS or (other partner), will not be in the position to achieve the primary objectives of the Heritage at Risk project, i.e. to adequately record heritage at risk according to the needs of the legislative framework and act as a catalyst for its re-use and regeneration. The opportunity and benefit for the historic environment, outlined in the above recommendations, will be missed;
- With regard to funding, it is proposed in light of a new 3 way partnership the project is core funded by HED, in partnership with the 11 local authorities. Because of the potential economy of scale, a relatively modest contribution from each local authority may provide sufficient levels of funding to allow the heritage at risk project to respond to an agreed level of support and guidance to each local authority and give a focus to achieving value against committed expenditure. The established waste management groupings may provide some insight into



this. A contribution and agreed partnership with local authorities will afford the opportunity to formalise relationships, and build on the heritage at risk project with them;

- From activity relating to this proposed core support from central and local government, the project should be well placed to seek additional outside project funding via the charitable partner, to help heritage at risk. For example, adding targeted project delivery against Heritage Action: types, owners, areas, campaigns;
  - A model based on this structure would have the potential to deliver benefit and value well in excess of anything that government alone or the private sector could deliver.
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## BACKGROUND:

The Built Heritage at Risk Northern Ireland (BHARNi) is a current partnership between the then Ulster Architectural Heritage Society, (UAHS) and the Historic Environment Division (HED). UAHS is a Non-Government Organisation with Charitable Status. HED is a division within the recently formed Department for Communities, (DfC) responsible for the statutory protection of the historic environment. UAHS has been funded by HED to fulfil its partnership role.

### UAHS AND HED MISSION STATEMENTS:

**UAHS exists to promote the appreciation and enjoyment of good architecture of all periods – from the prehistoric to the contemporary – in the nine counties of Ulster. It seeks to encourage the conservation, restoration and re-use of Ulster’s built heritage to regenerate and sustain our communities.**

**HED’s aim is to realise the value of the historic environment.**

UAHS and HED share similar mission statements and have worked together on the BHARNi partnership since 1993. This has been regarded by both HED and UAHS as having been a mutually positive and productive arrangement. The last agreement between UAHS and HED was established in 2013 and concluded in 2016. Core tasks included: maintaining the database, maintaining the online directory, convening meetings with owners, providing statistical information on progress against the PfG target 2008-11 and targeted activity for European Heritage Open Days.

The last year of the 2013-16 agreement was delivered on half the original allocation of funding. The terms of the agreement were amended in 2015 to try to address this change.

### ABOUT THE BHARNI DATABASE/REGISTER:

As part of the BHARNi Partnership a dedicated database records all **known** condition of individual heritage assets. This BHARNi database is managed by UAHS with the public access through an online register hosted by HED on the Department for Communities website. The database and associated statistics act as an indicator, to demonstrate the individual and overall condition of the historic environment and how this relates to areas, opportunities, pressures and threats.

With almost 200 buildings removed from the database since 2006, BHARNi profiles Northern Ireland’s success in the rescue of historic assets through restoration and repair. 487 Buildings at Risk are currently still on the database.

Compilation of data helps to identify problem buildings and or areas of potential, where more may be required to encourage or enable positive outcomes. Through the BHARNi database, HED, local authorities, people and communities can identify heritage at risk, and take targeted action to ensure that our historic environment is best cared for, protected and/or re-used for the benefit of generations to come.

In 2013, the Department of the Environment then responsible for the Historic Environment, commissioned a baseline survey on the condition of Northern Ireland’s listed buildings. This report identified 21.5% of all listed buildings in Northern Ireland to be in poor/very poor condition. 21.5% of over 8,000 amounts to over 1,700 listed buildings in poor/very poor condition, according to the 2014 report. If poor/very poor condition of these buildings is taken, in any way to translate to ‘at risk’ status, there may be more listed buildings at risk than the present total of 487 shown at present on the BHARNi register.

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## ASSESSING HERITAGE AT RISK

An entry on the BHARNI database or register is usually a listed building, an unlisted building within a conservation area or a scheduled monument or structure that meets one or several of the following criteria:

- Vacant with no identified new use
- Suffering from neglect and/or poor maintenance
- Suffering from structural problems
- Fire-damaged
- Unsecured and open to the elements
- Threatened with demolition

This list is not exhaustive, and other criteria may also be considered when assessing a building for inclusion in the Register.

Entries to the BHARNI Register have been included primarily on the basis of an external visual inspection of their condition. This does not constitute a structural appraisal and independent expert advice should always be sought.

Risk is assessed primarily on the basis of condition and occupancy. Buildings, which can be described as being in a ruinous, very poor, poor, or fair condition, are included within the Register regardless of their current occupancy status. A building or monument which is generally in a good or fair condition can also be included in the Register for reasons other than those based on an assessment of its condition. This may be due to several factors including recent functional redundancy or perhaps a threat of demolition.

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## ASSESSMENT OF CONDITION CRITERIA:

Ruinous	A roofless shell remains
Very poor	More than just the building shell remains, including some of the external fabric. The property may be totally or partially roofless and may be damaged from fire or suffer from severe structural problems
Poor	Most of the external fabric appears to be sound and intact but there are obvious signs of deterioration, highlighting a lack appropriate maintenance.
Fair	The building appears to be generally wind and watertight but there are evident signs of slow deterioration, not to the same extent as a building in poor condition but, after a brief period of time, would soon resemble such a building.
Good	The building fabric appears to be sound and routinely maintained. Another factor unconnected to its current condition or occupancy status has conspired to justify its addition to the BHARNI register, such as an application for demolition, or perhaps functional redundancy.

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## DEGREE OF RISK

Degree of Risk is determined for each structure ranging from critical to minimal. This information along with the condition allows the structures to be prioritised in terms of need.

## PRIORITY

For buildings at risk, the following priority categories are used as an indication of trend and as a means of prioritising action:

- A Immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric; no solution agreed.
- B Immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric; solution agreed but not yet implemented.
- C Slow decay; no solution agreed.
- D Slow decay; solution agreed but not yet implemented.
- E Under repair or in fair to good repair, but no user identified; or under threat of vacancy with no obvious new user (applicable only to buildings capable of beneficial use).
- F Repair scheme in progress and (where applicable) end use or user identified; functionally redundant buildings with new use agreed but not yet implemented.

## REVIEW:

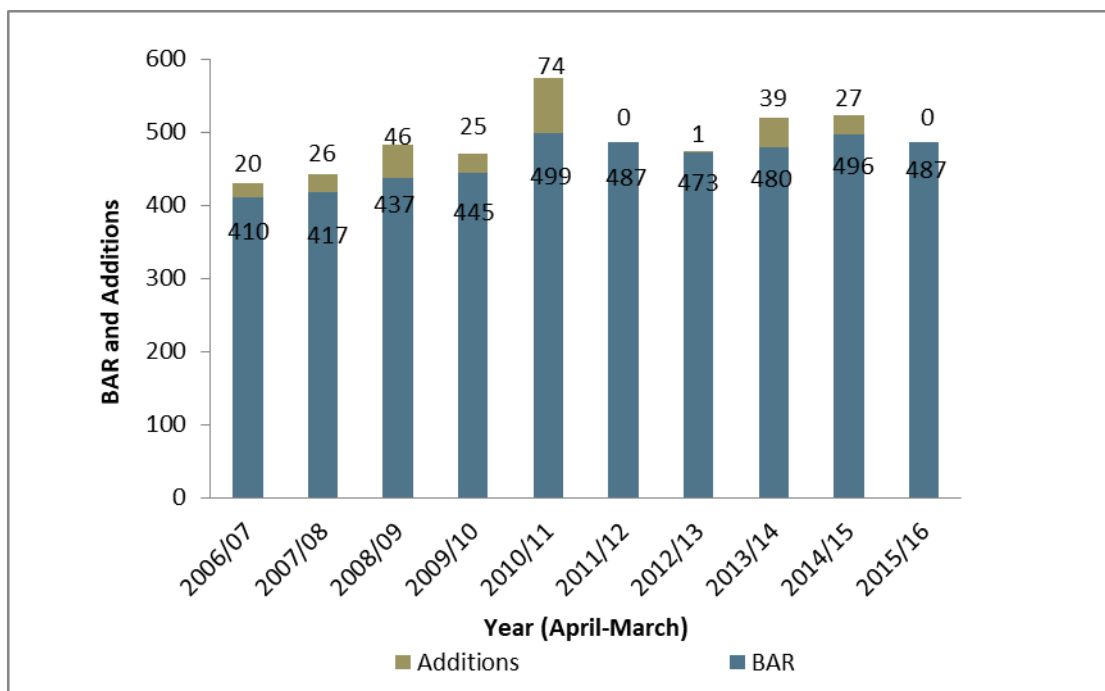
Between 2006-16, 192 buildings have been removed from the register, compared with 137 removals in the period 1993-2000. This suggests a relative consistency in rate of removals from the register between the two building at risk project time periods.

As of April 2016, there are 487 buildings identified as being at risk on the BHARNI Register. The total number at risk has remained within the region of 500 for the last ten years. The number of buildings at risk appears to have increased between the last commissioned report in 2000 and 2016, from 371 to 487. This increase may be due to methodology and assessment technique, or it may be taken to imply an increase in buildings at risk.

### BHARNI HEADLINE STATISTICS 2016:

- 8702 listed buildings
- 1875 scheduled monuments
- 66 conservation areas
- **487 Total entries on the BHARNI database 2016**
- **192 BHARNI removals from the BHARNI database 2006-2016**
- **61%, a majority of BHARNI owners are 'private' owners**
- **44%, a majority of BHARNI entries are 'houses'**
- **40%, a majority of BHARNI entries are listed B1**
- **17%, the highest number of BHARNI entries are located in the Newry Mourne & Down local authority area.**

If we look at the register as of 2006 to 2016, we can identify current trends by grade, location, ownership and use. These figures can be used to set priorities for recommendations going forward. Please see the breakdown of the 2016 'at risk' data, below:



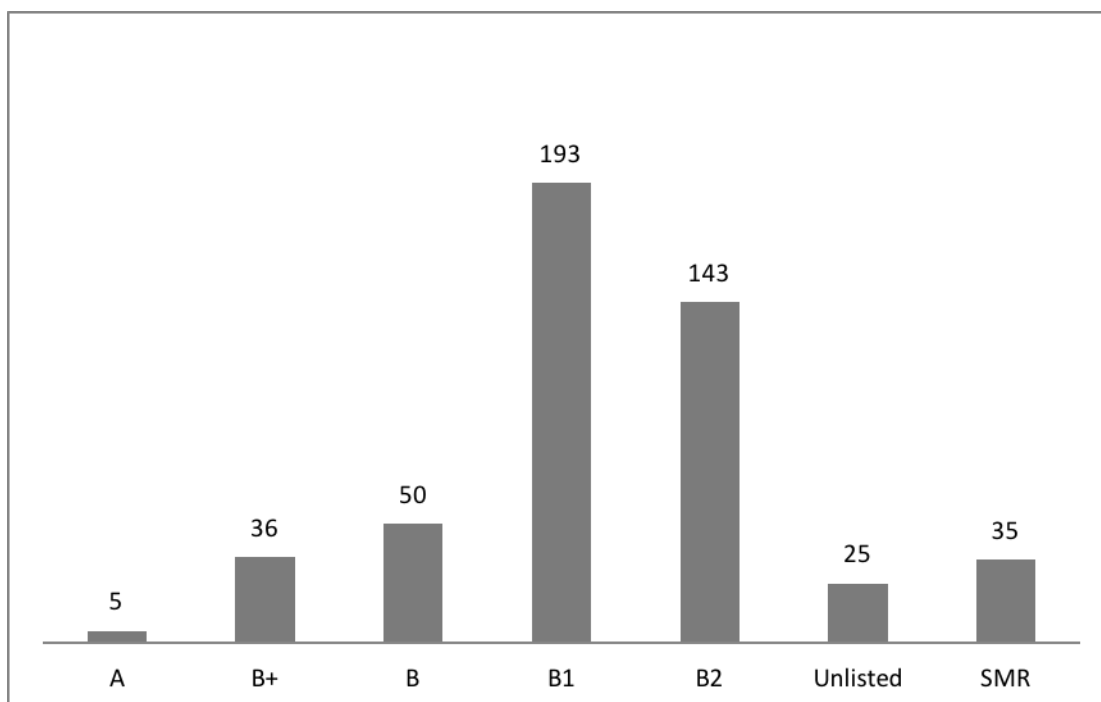
**Figure Total Heritage and numbers added to the at risk register 2006-16.**

The graph below breaks down the heritage assets currently at risk by grade of protection.

Grade B1 and B2 Listed Buildings account for the majority of heritage assets, comprising almost 70% of heritage on the BHARNI register<sup>1</sup>. This can be seen to correspond with overall listed building data for Northern Ireland where the highest number of buildings are classified as grade B.

There are currently 5 Grade A heritage assets included on the BHARNI register, equating to approximately 1%. Grade A buildings represent the buildings of the greatest importance to Northern Ireland and are likely to include outstanding architectural features or national or international importance.

Scheduled monuments currently account for a relatively small number of entries. It is anticipated that more scheduled monuments will be included on the Register. This will bring it into line with similar heritage at risk registers in the UK.



**BHARNI entries by grade of protection**

#### FACTORS AFFECTING HERITAGE AT RISK IN NORTHERN IRELAND:

The process by which a building is removed from the register may be dependent on a number of factors including legislative framework, funding, other incentives, ownership, location and use. Almost 200 buildings were removed from the register during the 2006-16 period. Though UAHS and HED have for many years recorded, and profiled removals or 'saves', there has been no systematic system within the current BHARNI project to assess how removals happen e.g. transfer of ownership, change

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<sup>1</sup> These grades are a subset of Grade B, which is assigned to buildings of local importance and good examples of a particular period or style. There are 7,439 buildings in this category (June 1997). Since 1987 the Department has been banding Grade B buildings into two groups namely B1 and B2. Generally B1 is chosen for buildings that qualify for listing by virtue of a relatively wide selection of attributes. Usually these will include interior features or where one or more features are of exceptional quality and/or interest. B2 is chosen for buildings that qualify for listing by virtue of only a few attributes. An example would be a building sited within a conservation area where the quality of its architectural appearance raises it appreciably above the general standard of buildings within the conservation area. (taken from PPS6, Annex 6 'Grading of Listed Buildings')

of use, availability of funding, and other incentives. However, a review of BHARNI headline statistics against key factors in the 2006-16 period gives an insight into the BHARNI project, the challenges that face buildings at risk. This review acts as a background to recommendations detailed in this report. Based on the findings of the last SOS report, and present UAHS knowledge and statistics, factors affecting the progress of buildings from the BHARNI register may include:

1. **Legislative Framework;**
2. **Ownership;**
3. **Type;**
4. **Location;**
5. **Repair & Maintenance;**
6. **Funding;**
7. **Other Incentives.**

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## THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK:

Legislation for the protection of historic buildings, and associated governance responsibility now lies between the 11 local authorities, Department for Communities, Historic Environment Division, Department for Infrastructure, Planning NI. Since 2015, a large part of responsibility and control for protection of the historic environment - planning, including designation-conservation areas, enforcement, building preservation notices, local listing, community and local development planning have been with local authorities. With Historic Environment Division remaining responsible for designation-listed buildings, scheduled monuments, repairs notices, compulsory purchase orders, and the role of statutory consultee in the planning process. The Department for Infrastructure has a governance and regulatory role in the planning process.

The primary legislation controlling land use planning including the built heritage is the 'Planning (Northern Ireland) Act 2011'. The subordinate legislation comprises Statutory Rules, including Regulations and General Orders, which relate to the historic built environment, including the 'Planning (Listed Buildings) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015'. The government's spatial strategy for Northern Ireland is set out in the Regional Development Strategy 2035.

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### Key Legislative Functions of Local Authorities:

- Community Plans
- Local Development Plans
- Determination of applications for listed building applications;
- Determination of applications for Archaeology; Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes;
- Issuing of Building Preservation Notices (BPNs);
- Enforcement;
- Maintaining and developing a list of historic buildings – known as a 'local' list. This is a discretionary power but one with great potential for positive community engagement;
- Management of Conservation Areas including control of demolition, designation and issue of supplementary design guidance;
- Identification and Designation of Areas of Townscape Character (including Areas of Village Character);
- Responsibility for maintaining the Council's own estate of listed properties, which include a number of iconic listed buildings.
- Identification and issuing of tree preservation orders
- Implementation of Article 4 directions
- Application of The Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017 with reference to individual and cumulative loss of historical architectural assets.



**Exemptions – dealt with by the Department for Communities, HED or by the Department for Infrastructure, and not by Local Authorities:**

- Listed buildings;
- Specific listed building enforcement functions, namely compulsory purchase orders;
- Scheduled monument consent;
- Some regionally significant applications which will be determined by the Department for Infrastructure (DfI).

When the department believes a decision to have been arrived at incorrectly, it can call in an application for determination.

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## **Specific Legislative Functions for the Protection of Built Heritage at Risk:**

### **Local Plan Making- Community & Local Development Plans:**

Since 2015, each local authority has been given the responsibility of developing a community plan, and a local development plan. Priorities for historic buildings and a strategy for their management in both planning and protection must be built in to each local development plan (LDP), transferring the guiding principles of existing, established policy PPS6, if local authorities are to perform well in best care for our historic environment. LDPs will be the guiding principles in the care of each local authority heritage asset. LDPs should highlight areas of regeneration potential, and the re-use of buildings at risk as a priority.

Most local authorities have included data from the BHARNI register when developing community and local development plans. For most local authorities the process of community and local development plans are still ongoing, so the actual targets and outcomes relating to the data provided is yet to be seen. However, it is important to note that the register has, from an early stage been a key reference for councils as they assume these powers. HED and UAHS have where possible worked to support and guide the 11 local authorities, with reference to the reform of local administration and ongoing consultation on local development plans.

### **Building Preservation Notices:**

A building preservation notice is a form of temporary listing, also known as “ad hoc listing”, which provides statutory protection to an unlisted building, for a period of 6 months, as though it were listed. **Local Authorities** have power to serve a notice on the owner and occupier of a non-listed building if they consider that it is of special architectural or historic interest, or it is in danger of demolition or alteration that would affect its character and interest. DFC:HED are willing to engage with councils wishing to establish these procedures for heritage protection and can provide further advice, (*A good practice guide for councils, (1.1) DOE May 2015*).

### **Enforcement:**

Where unauthorised works have been carried out on listed buildings or buildings in conservation areas, or works do not comply with the consent given, the council’s planning division has powers to serve a notice requiring the restoration of the building, either to its former state, or to the state it would have been in, if the terms of the consent had been complied with. This is known as a Listed Building Enforcement Notice, and there is no set time limit between the date of the offence and the issue of such a notice.

*Prior to transfer of planning powers to DFC, the DOE published guidance on the policies and procedures to assist councils with the issuing of enforcement notices, namely Urgent Works Notices, a good practice guide for councils, Version 1.1 DOE May 2015 Building Preservation Notices, a good practice guide for councils, Version 1.1 DOE May 2015.*

### **Repairs Notices:**

Repairs notices are served by the **Historic Environment Division**. They are a part of the process of issuing a Compulsory Purchase Order (see below). Repairs notices may be issued to listed buildings, but not to unlisted buildings in Conservation Areas. A time period is afforded to the building owner to give them the opportunity to comply with the requirements of the notice. The powers are not confined to urgent works, or to unoccupied buildings, but may be used where prolonged failure by an owner to keep a listed building in a reasonable state of repair has placed the building at risk. A list of buildings at risk is included in appendix.

*Please note that a separate guidance note is not available for Repairs Notices, but further information is contained within the Urgent Works Notices guidance, (see above).*

### **Compulsory Purchase Order:**

The **Historic Environment Division** has powers to compulsorily purchase a listed building. Section 202 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 allows them to do this, if the building has fallen into a poor state of repair and reasonable steps have not been taken to properly preserve it.

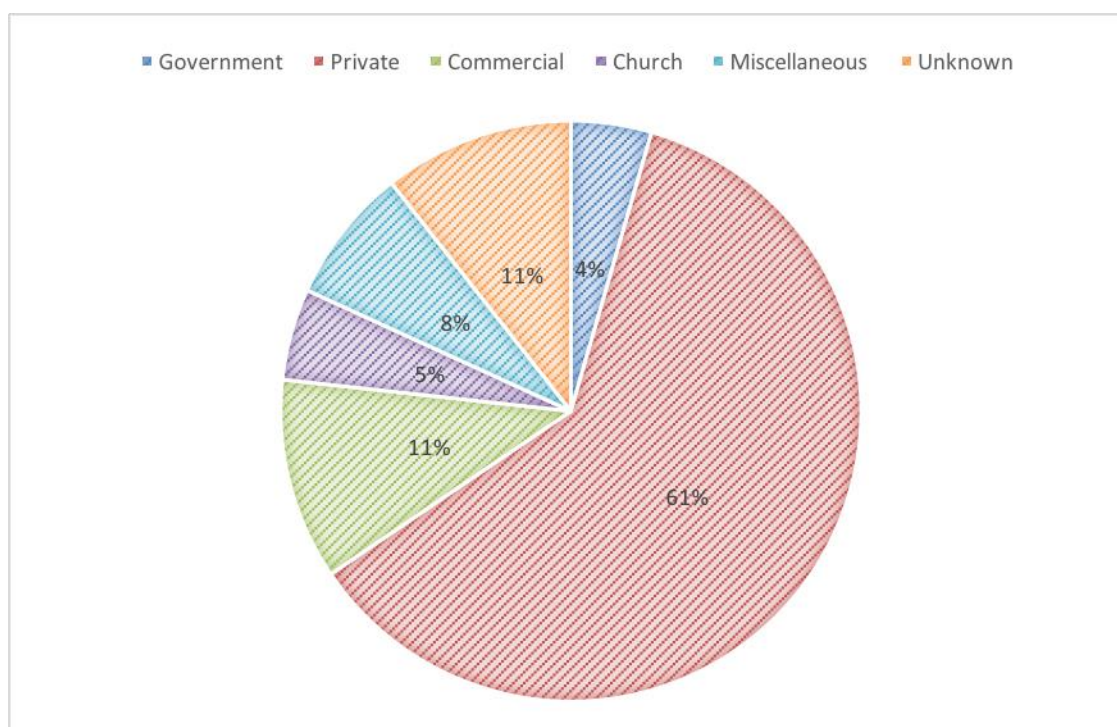
A clear plan comprising consecutive steps of action needs to be in place to effect the compulsory purchase of buildings, and it must be preceded by the issue of a repairs notice from the department and specify the period of time, to allow the owner the opportunity to comply with the requirements of the notice.

The powers of compulsory purchase, or vesting, a listed building, rest with the Historic Environment Division rather than the local authority. The Historic Environment Division seeks willing partners from the voluntary sector who would be willing to take on responsibility for the building, as a prerequisite to taking action. In practice this may require the input and advice of the local planning authority on suitable partners. Voluntary organisations as distinct from government agencies have the advantage of being able to access grant aid for repair and reuse of listed buildings and therefore may be suitable candidates for taking on such properties.

A compulsory purchase order, otherwise known as “vesting” is very much a last resort, but it nonetheless presents a solution to ongoing dereliction and blight caused by the most problematic historic buildings, where other options have failed.

Sion Mills Stables, near Strabane, is the *only* building in Northern Ireland to date to be subject of a compulsory purchase order issued by the Minister for the Environment in 2008, Following restoration, after acquisition by Hearth and onward leased to Sion Mills Building Preservation Trust.

The ownership category analysis of BHARNI structures reveals a fairly consistent picture. The majority (61%) are in private ownership; structures in commercial and church ownership account for 16%; while government, both central and local, is responsible for 8%. Different types of owners can face different challenges and opportunities in caring for and protecting historic buildings. This may in addition be related to 'Type', 'Location', and 'Funding' as outlined below.



### **BHARNI entries by ownership.**

#### **Private:**

61% of buildings at risk are in private ownership. The significantly high level of private owners is worth noting in any future strategies for removing heritage at risk from the register. Many of these buildings are houses, which translates directly to the high levels of this type on the building at risk register, outlined below. Unsurprisingly, high number of private owners on the BHARNI register may be seen to reflect the wider ownership of Northern Ireland's building stock and the predominance of buildings required for residential use.

It is widely acknowledged that many owners of listed buildings face financial challenge in raising the capital to cover the deficit in maintaining and restoring our historic assets according to legislative requirements. A challenge commonly referred to as '*heritage deficit*'. The means to bridge this gap is particularly challenging for private owners who cannot apply for many of the main sources of public funding, such as HLF. See section on 'Funding', below.

#### **Commercial:**

Commercial owners account for 11% of the buildings on the at risk register. Commercial owners with an eye for heritage buildings and their social and economic potential have very successfully established good business models to put historic buildings back into use, for example, the Merchant Hotel, Belfast.

Some commercial owners however, have to establish the balance between sympathetic and appropriate use and economic gain. Commercial owners should be encouraged to progress with heritage led regeneration, applicable to the legislative framework, outlined above, adopting best practice to harness the best outcome for architectural, historical and economic value from our heritage asset.

Use of historic buildings for commercial purposes has been proven to add social, economic and tourism value to our towns and cities. At times this opportunity is delayed and buildings deteriorate. Often commercial buildings or buildings with commercial potential suffer as a result of the practice of 'land-banking'. Especially where development pressure and the potential for economic gain is highest, for example, Belfast.

By way of reference to examples like the Merchant Hotel, it should be considered that the economic opportunity of development and the opportunity to save an historic building are one and the same. In terms of funding, the commercial owner may have established business models that can provide the funding for the conservation or restoration of an historic building. Acknowledging that investing in associated 'heritage deficit' implies enhanced return by way of the added value, and draw, that is offered by the unique character of the building once it has been saved, and is in full commercial use.

#### **Government:**

Buildings in local or central government ownership account for 4% of those on the BHARNI register. The process of Community Asset Transfer can be a viable option to address the issue of those buildings in Government ownership, enabling the transfer of buildings to Building Preservation Trusts (BPTs), Community Trusts and Social Enterprises or others who are placed well within local communities to find solutions and funding opportunities to put historic buildings back into use.

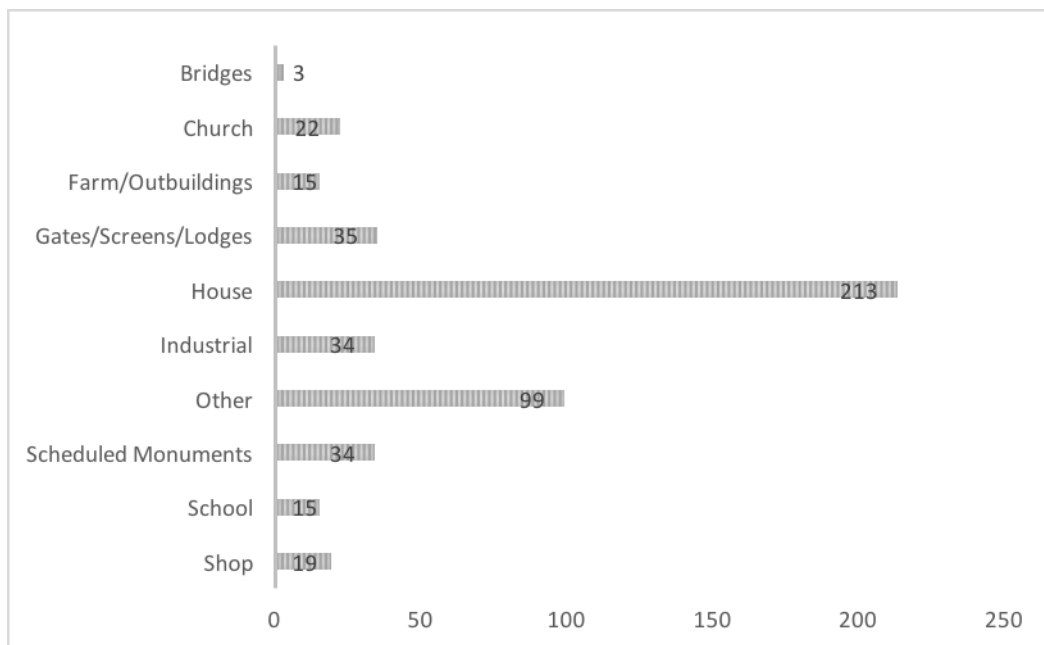
#### **Miscellaneous:**

The owner category 'miscellaneous' may include some community owners. The development of Building Preservation Trusts (BPTs), Community Trusts and Social Enterprises, of which 18 are currently subscribed from Northern Ireland to the UK wide Heritage Trust Network have proven beneficial to the success and delivery of heritage projects and reuse of buildings in the past. For example, formerly Hearth Revolving Fund, now Hearth Historic Building Trust, the oldest dating from 1978 'saved' Sion Mills Stables from almost being completely lost while also promoting education, employment and promoting local history. Community led organisations may also have the benefit of applying for a 'cocktail' of funding from more than one source. See section on 'Funding', below. Whilst at risk, community owned buildings usually have a local trust or other group actively developing a plan. Buildings in such ownership will remain on the register during this time, until signed off as saved, and removed.

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#### **TYPE**

Approximately 40% of all buildings at risk fall within the use category of *house*. This figure does not distinguish between rural/urban/large or small house but they have all been habitable at some point and should lead themselves to sympathetic development. This would appear to correspond with the level of private ownership described above. No other type category makes it into double figures, but *Scheduled Monuments*, *Gate/Screens/Lodges* and *Industrial* buildings also account for a fairly substantial minority of entries. A whole range of other categories are accounted for but at much lower frequencies within the *other* category. This demonstrates the wide variety of heritage assets that have become vulnerable and are in need of a new use or bespoke programme of maintenance.



### **BHARNI entries by building use (HED).**

As a subset to this data is the consideration of thatch of which most sit within the category of 'house'.

**Note:** HED building use details have again been taken from the online Northern Ireland Buildings Database, and some of these categories might change as a consequence of the ongoing 2nd survey process. For ease of analysis, the lower frequency categories have been grouped together for the bar chart.

Changing demographics in areas and patterns of worship together with the particulars of the unique architectural character of churches has brought about the increase in church buildings becoming redundant. Further to this, the change in industry across the island and the shift in the economic basis of the wealthy linen industry has resulted in many larger mill buildings being added to the at risk register. In contrast, gate lodges and thatched buildings are often of smaller scale, presenting different challenges and opportunities for re-use.

## **LOCATION**

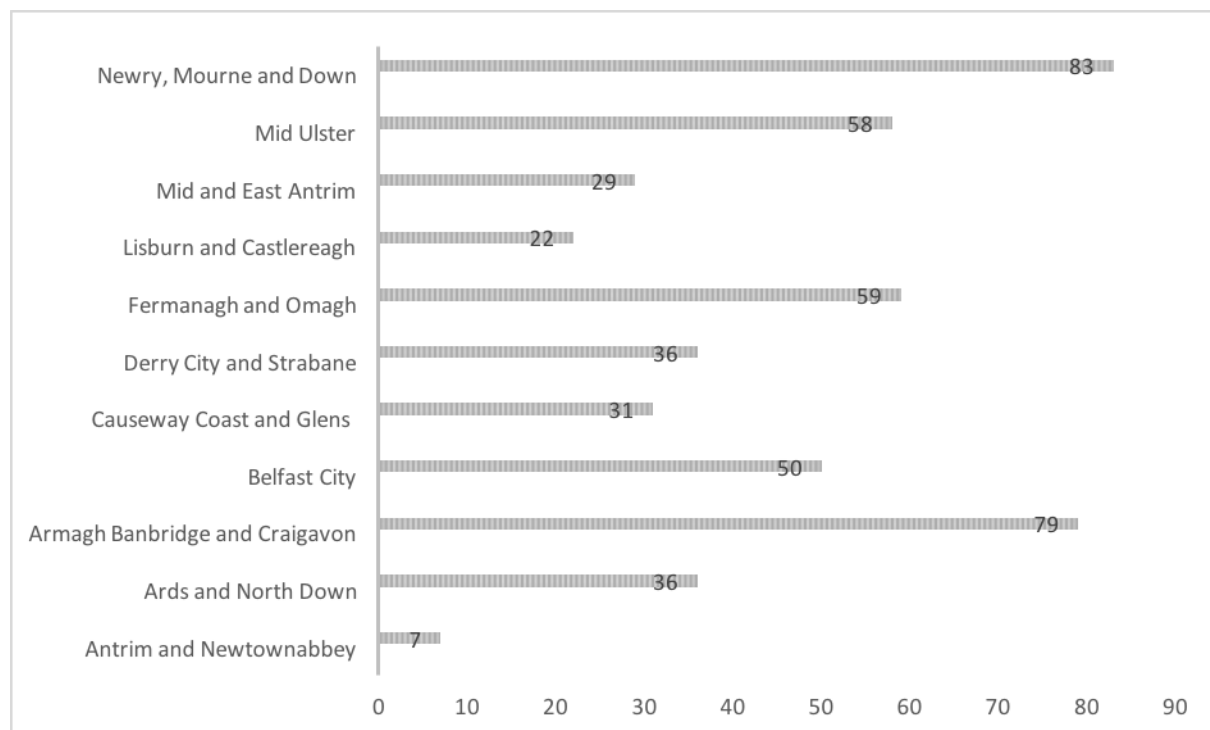
The highest concentration of heritage at risk entries are found in the Newry, Mourne and Down and the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon District Council areas with 83 and 79 entries respectively. The lowest number of buildings at risk is in the Antrim and Newtownabbey area with just 7 recordings.

Factors contributing to high levels of buildings at risk in any location may include a high quality of existing historic environment of a local authority area, which may therefore equate to a high number of listed buildings which may increase the number of buildings at risk. It may be that a local authority has a high number of buildings in harder to reach or rural locations therefore difficulty in attracting investment. On the other hand, it may be that a high level of development pressure adds to the likelihood of owners holding on to property without investment in the long term. This concept, otherwise referred to as 'land banking', is a process of aggregating land or property for future sale or development which can result in vacancy and dereliction of buildings over many years. This may be seen to be more prolific in city and town centres where development potential is highest e.g. Belfast.

It is important that each local authority area considers its responsibility for Buildings at Risk in the context of that particular council area, including the context of each Community and Local Development Plans. Requests to HED and UAHS from local authorities regarding the BHARNI

register, including requests for data, support and advice has increased since the reform of local administration in 2015. A full assessment of the support required from the BHARNI project in the new context of local government is required.

**Note:** The areas of concentration for BHARNI may fluctuate as the second survey of listed buildings moves around Northern Ireland, highlighting new vulnerable structures. Due to the register being based on 'known' data, together with delay in the process of the second survey, it should be noted that some parts of Northern Ireland may not have been recently surveyed.



#### **BHARNI entries by Council Area.**

#### **REPAIR, MAINTENANCE & SECURITY:**

Whatever the owner, type or location of a building, some guiding principles prevail. Repair, maintenance and levels of security are fundamental to keeping any building, historic or otherwise, from disrepair, dereliction or damage.

Regular, small scale maintenance is the most effective way to protect buildings from disrepair and decay. As is the case for any building, a small, regular outlay on the part of an owner can save the need for large scale intervention and cost. Granted that the outlay for appropriate works to a historic building may, in some cases, be higher than that of others, the long term benefits of proper repair and maintenance can be significant in securing a building's future and keeping it from needing to be added to the BHARNI register. The most common cause of damage is water ingress, either from roofs, rainwater goods or exterior walls. A regular schedule of inspection of a property can help early identification of risk and even stop deterioration of a building before important character is lost.

Further to this, proper measures for security are key to stopping progression of risk. Instances of 'Heritage Crime'- vandalism, fire, etc. are more prevalent in buildings that are not occupied and are not properly secured or monitored. Owners must be encouraged to either keep historic buildings occupied, through options of partial/temporary (meanwhile) use, or adequate levels of security to ensure their protection.



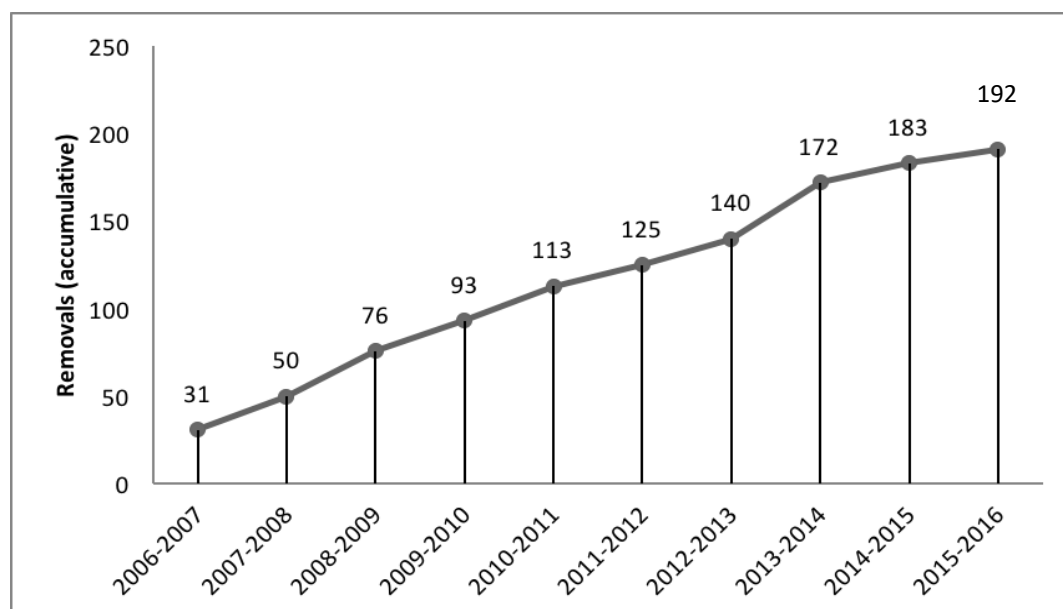
## FUNDING:

The availability of funding is considered key to the removal of buildings at risk from the register. It is accepted that early intervention can reduce the costs of restoration. With this in mind HED and UAHS encourage regular maintenance and repair to avoid further deterioration of at risk structures, as neglect increases costs of long term restoration and repair. However, some buildings, for various reasons reach a level of deterioration where significant funding is required to remove them from the register. This is particularly important given the impact of VAT payable on repairs on top of aforementioned heritage deficit.

There are various sources of funding available for built heritage at risk projects, particularly, but not exclusively, Heritage Lottery Fund, Architectural Heritage Fund, Ulster Garden Villages and HED. Other ways in which community owned buildings might be supported include social enterprise and community shares. Private owners are limited in that they are unlikely to be able to avail of any of the aforementioned funding.

'Listed Building Grant Aid', from the DoE, provided funding for eligible repair works on listed buildings, including private owners, at up to 45%, to a value of £500,000 per building, where applicable. A total value of £4.6 million was provided by central government for Listed Building Grant Aid, 2014-15. Listed Building Grant Aid was suspended in 2015. A new Historic Environment Fund was launched by HED in 2016/17 to a reduced value of £500,000.

Between 2006 and 16 there has been an average rate of approximately 20 removals per annum. Most removals were recorded in 2013-14 when 32 buildings were saved. This corresponds with the year that listed building grant aid was at its highest, with a total spend of £4.6 million and a specific spend of 1,407k on buildings a risk. This may be taken to suggest a link between the rate of removals and the availability and level of grant aid. Another slight increase in removals was seen in 2008 and this may be interpreted to be due to the introduction of acquisition grant, or letters issued to owners. However, it is most likely related to the extended the availability of grant aid to B2 listed buildings that year.



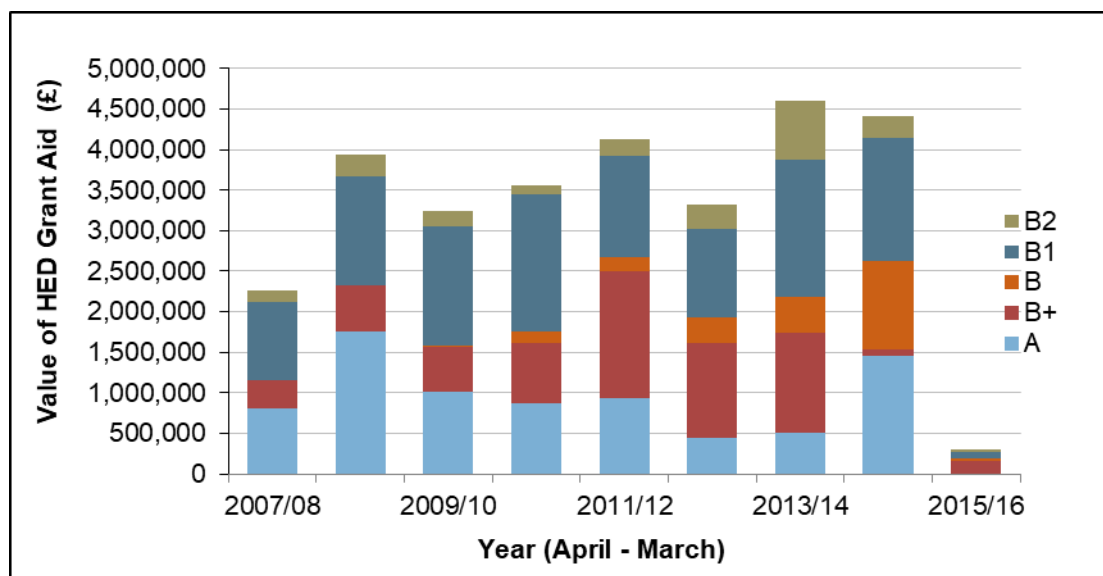
### Heritage removed from the at risk register 2006-2016.

Least removals were recorded in 2014/15 and 2015/16 where 11 and 8 buildings were removed respectively. The significant reduction in 2014/15 period corresponds with announcement of cut backs to the availability of listed building grants, amidst proposal of cessation of listed building grants in the draft budget for 2015/16. In 2015/16 a significant reduction in removals remained, corresponding with the complete suspension of listed building grants by HED. This period has also seen the number of



buildings at risk rise from 5% to 6% of 8,500 listed buildings, 501 in 2017. UAHS activity was also curtailed to half previous capacity during the 2015/16 period, which will have had an impact on influencing and recording removals of buildings at risk.

However, a link between the availability of grant aid and removals from the BHARNI Register was questioned by the DoE, now DfC Listed Building Grant Scheme Performance Measurement Framework, March 2016. This stated *'that with the exception of 2012/13, in each year since 2008 only around a third of the buildings removed from the register each year, because they are no longer considered to be at risk, had been financially supported by the listed building grant scheme'*. The HED report suggested that *'other factors, such as economic conditions or grant availability from other agencies may also be having a significant impact'*. HED recommended that further research be carried out to understand these dynamics more fully.



#### Value of Listed Building Grant Aid by Listed Building Grade.

While grant aid for repairs is considered to be an important part of the success of the Built Heritage at Risk project, rate of removal and addition of buildings at risk is also regarded to be also influenced by factors, outlined above.

#### OTHER INCENTIVES/DISINCENTIVES

This report highlights the social, economic societal incentives for caring for and protecting the historic environment, throughout. As aforementioned, availability of funding can be a leading incentive for the protection of historic buildings. Disincentives must also be recognised.

VAT introduced in the UK in 1973, payable on repairs to all buildings, has been a tax disincentive to the appropriate repair and timely maintenance of historic buildings and encouraged alteration (zero rated) at the expense of retaining historic fabric. The additional imposition VAT, at the full rate on alterations, in 2012 has placed a significant additional burden on owners of listed buildings who were already acting in the interest of heritage repair and regeneration. VAT on repairs and alterations diminishes the economic viability of heritage projects, adding to aforementioned 'heritage deficit', and can be seen as a disincentive to those considering the acquisition, repair and regeneration of historic buildings. UAHS has for many years recommended that this is reversed.

Non-domestics rate exemptions apply if a building is vacant and is listed or is the subject of a Building Preservation Notice or the property is a Historic Monument. The exemption on rates in this regard is seen in some cases to perpetuate vacancy, particularly with regard to non-domestic, commercial property. This may be seen to actually incentivise 'land banking', particularly in the centre of cities,

towns and villages where higher level rates may apply, and given the ongoing lack of will to actively enforce.

That being said, there is undoubtedly merit in rates exemption but the current blanket, open ended approach is not achieving optimum policy impact and would benefit from redesign in consultation with the responsible authorities. Additionally, some private owners may qualify to access non heritage related grant aid for their buildings in the form of, for example, heating and insulation schemes and in some instances, window replacement. The coordination of such schemes with listed and un-listed historic building ownership and policy requirement could deliver useful cross departmental benefit.

### 1. CRUMLIN ROAD COURTHOUSE



**Location:** Crumlin Road, Belfast, Co. Antrim  
**Status:** B+ (Second Surveyed 2009)  
**HB ref:** HB26/35/006  
**BHARNI ref:** 26/35/001

The B+ listed, Crumlin Road Courthouse is a grand neo-Classical building with rendered and brightly painted facades. A large hexastyle Corinthian portico dominates the front elevation and is surmounted by a 'Justice' figure, now lacking the necessary scales. Internally, the central hall and two court rooms *were* considered to be the most important spaces.

Crumlin Road Gaol, outlined earlier as a 'removal', and the former Crumlin Road Courthouse were built in the mid 19th century, in radically different architectural styles, to designs by the leading local architect of the day, Charles Lanyon (albeit that the courthouse underwent significant alterations and additions by Young and Mackenzie in 1905). Sited immediately opposite each other they form an imposing group and as well as having a functional relationship in the administration of justice they are also physically linked via an underground tunnel.

Since decommissioning from its original use, the Courthouse, empty since the late 1990s, has suffered a series of arson attacks which have seriously damaged much of its roof structure and important interior. Following a number of transfers in ownership, in March 2016 it was announced that Crumlin Courthouse has recently been purchased and is currently proposed for re-use as a hotel.

## 2. THATCH COTTAGE, 360 SEACOAST ROAD

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**Location:** Seacoast Road, Magilligan, Co. Londonderry  
**Status:** B1 (Second Surveyed 1997)  
**HB ref:** HB02/09/045  
**BHARNI ref:** 02/09/003

A B1 listed thatch cottage located in the North-West of Northern Ireland added to the BHARNI register in 2015. The cottage is a six bay long basalt built thatched house with gabled ends, three chimneys and jamb wall entry. The thatch is neatly done in marram grass or bent with the typical fringe eaves finish neatly trimmed and roped. The owner did the thatching himself with bent cut from the M O D lands with permission. Good example of a small late Georgian vernacular thatched house. Part of the roof has collapsed and a structural engineer has deemed the property structurally unsafe and dangerous to live in. It is important that these problems be addressed soon before the property deteriorates any further. Through support from the Department for Communities Historic Environment Fund, the Magilligan Fund and UAH, works are ongoing to repair and restore the cottage.

## 3. GATE LODGE AT HOCKLEY LODGE

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**Location:** Dunmilly Road,  
Richhill, Co. Armagh  
**Status:** B1 (not Second Surveyed)  
**HB ref:** HB15/03/009 A  
**BHARNI ref:** 15/03/002

Hockley Lodge added to the BHARNI register in 2003 is considered by Brett to be “An unexpected Regency stucco cottage of the grander kind, perhaps of 1817-20”, further adding that it is “a bit out of place in the lush countryside of County Armagh, though perhaps with affiliations to the lamented Pavilion in the city”. Three gate lodges once graced the various entrances to the main house but, as reported in Buildings at Risk, Vol. 4, p. 33, the Drumilly lodge was demolished in 1996. Fortunately, this little lodge of c.1834, which is arguably the most attractive of the original three, still stands. Described by Dean as “single-storey 3-roomed on a cruciform plan”, it is now somewhat overgrown, as it was when it first appeared in Buildings at Risk, Vol. 4. The condition of the render is slowly deteriorating incurring brick exposure. In parts the rain water goods have failed and are blocked with vegetation. The tiled roofed is in fair condition, however tile slippage in certain areas raises concern for facilitating water ingress into roof structure.



#### 4. BARBOUR CAMPBELL'S THREAD MILL

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**Location:** Mill Road, Hilden, Co. Antrim  
**Status:** B+ (Second Surveyed 2010)  
**HB ref:** HB19/17/013 A  
**BHARNI ref:** 19/17/001

The Barbour Campbell Threads complex at Hilden closed as a manufacturing centre and consequently added to the BHARNI register in 2005. At one time the mill was said by Bassett to have accommodated “the largest manufacturers in the world of tailors’ thread and shoemakers’ thread for hand and machine sewing”. The complex comprises a number of brick, stone and stucco finished buildings with perhaps the most interesting, architecturally, being the five-bay, two-storey counting house. The remaining structures are, for the most part, unadorned but are just as impressive due to the scale and robustness of their construction. As the Mill and ancillary buildings now lie vacant and derelict, the surrounding area has been subject to an ongoing mixed-use redevelopment scheme which plans to reuse parts of the mill building. However as of yet work on the Mill building have not commenced where it is hoped that the listed structure is approached in a sensitive and conservation-led manner, yet in the meantime the building is steadily deteriorating with no remedial care.

#### 5. ST. MATTHIA'S CHURCH

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**Location:** Glen Road, Belfast, Co. Antrim  
**Status:** B1 (Second Surveyed 2000)  
**HB ref:** HB26/22/003  
**BHARNI ref:** 26/22/001

Although not now uncommon to feature an ecclesiastical building as a building at risk, this particular church is a highly unusual example. Once referred to as the ‘Jesse James Chapel’ it is described in the HM/BR as a “Rare example of a corrugated iron clad single storey church of 1892 in plain Gothic style. Its appearance is of a frontier church of the American west”. Hence the outlaw reference. First opened in 1892 by the Lord Bishop of Down, it was used for some 70 years by the Church of Ireland, before being re-consecrated as a Catholic Church in 1970, following demographic changes in the area. Initially coming to prominence following plans for its replacement with a new church building, it was subsequently listed B1 and has lain empty ever since. It is an extremely rare building of great social importance to the area and it would be hoped that some beneficial use can be found. When reviewed in 2016 the increasing growing ivy on the structure may be a cause for concern as well as weathering of the corrugated iron.

## 6. CAIRNDHU

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**Location:** Cairndhu, Coast Road, Ballygally, Co. Antrim  
**Status:** B1 (Second Surveyed 1997)  
**HB ref:** HB06/03/008  
**BHARNI ref:** 06/03/001

Built for John Stewart Clark sometime around 1880, and extended by well-known local architect Samuel P. Close in 1897, Cairndhu was used as a private home until 1949, when it was gifted by Sir Thomas Dixon to the people of Northern Ireland for use as a convalescent home. That function ceased in 1986 and the building was unaccountably sold, firstly to the local council, and subsequently to a succession of private owners. The house and associated estate buildings of the former Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Hospital has been the cause of much public concern since the early 1990s. The one-and-a-half storey gate lodge was the first building within the grounds to be featured as a building at risk, while the multi-gabled main building was highlighted soon after in *Buildings at Risk*, Vol. 2, p. 11, where it was described as being in need of urgent repair. Both the main house and the stable block to the rear have been the subject of two 'Urgent Works Notices' – the first time that this power was utilised by the DOE (NI). However, despite some work being undertaken the house is again open to the elements and considerable original fabric, including the grand staircase and feature fireplaces have been removed. Follow up on the UWNs has not been evident. A new scheme incorporating a care facility and a housing scheme has received some recent publicity.

## 7. NO. 4 SEVEN HOUSES

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**Location:** Upper English Street, Armagh, Co. Armagh  
**Status:** B (Not Second Surveyed)  
**HB ref:** HB15/16/005C  
**BHARNI ref:** 15/16/003

Part of a terrace of six, originally seven, houses erected by Dean Averall (then Rector of Tynan) for occupation by his seven sisters, no. 4 was added to the register in 2017. The handsome three-storey terrace built with Armagh marble limestone with classical detail, were built 1768-1770. No. 4 is suffering greatly from neglect, and most notably the timber frames of the windows are in need of repair, where presently in their deteriorating state will be facilitating water ingress into the surrounding stonework and interiors.

## 8. GREAT JAMES STREET, PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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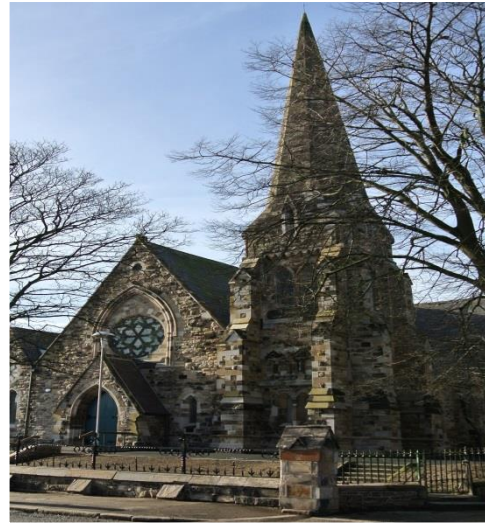
**Location:** Great James Street, Derry, Co. Londonderry  
**Status:** B+ (Second Surveyed 2014)  
**HB ref:** HB01/21/009  
**BHARNI ref:** 01/21/001

This building has been the subject of much recent speculation. It was first highlighted in *Buildings at Risk*, Vol. 2, p. 69, where it appeared beside the Whitehall Chambers in Hawkin Street. The Chambers have subsequently been demolished and this equally 'difficult' building is now empty and facing an uncertain future. A very powerful neo-classical composition, it was built in 1837 to the designs of Stewart Gordon, and was to be the third Presbyterian Church in the city. Its front façade is dominated by a projecting central-pediment portico supported by four ionic columns on a broad flight of steps, which are flanked by scrolled edges. Behind is a four-bay, two-storey hall with large, round-headed windows. There is a Venetian window on the rear elevation, behind the pulpit. Set back from the main frontage line of the neighbouring buildings on Great James Street, it is certainly an impressive sight, and would be too valuable an asset to lose. The building is currently only used as an ad-hoc venue for temporary music events and the fore ground of the building used as a car-park. It is hoped that interest in this building prevails as although in need of repair, still remains an impressive building on Great James Street. Cultúrlann Uí Chanáin, Irish Language, Culture and Enterprise organisation have recently progressed first stages of grant application and planning, with a view to this building's restoration and reuse.



### 1. DUNCAIRN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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**Location:** Antrim Road, Belfast, Co. Antrim  
**Status:** B+ Listed (not Second surveyed)  
**HB ref:** HB26/43/008  
**BHARNI ref:** 26/43/004  
**Saved:** 2014

The former Duncairn Presbyterian Church, designed c. 1860 by WJ Barre and later developed by architects Young and Mackenzie was a long term building at risk within North Belfast. The building had become redundant in 1995 due to a dwindling congregation and soon purchased by the 174 Trust, who had plans to eventually reuse the church. After a number of difficult years with the building continuing to deteriorate due to water damage and vandalism the 174 Trust managed to secure the funding needed for its restoration.

The process has taken almost ten years but the successful restoration has created an important shared community space in North Belfast within a significant and sympathetically restored building which opened in 2014.

Restoration work was facilitated by funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, International Fund for Ireland and NIEA Listed Building Grant Aid for £500, 00. The new Duncairn Culture and Arts Centre has been designed to provide a much-needed shared community space in the North Belfast area, enhancing the Trust's main aims of promoting and facilitating social cohesion and development in the area. The sympathetically converted church was a fitting venue for the launch of the Built Heritage at Risk online Traditional Building Skills Directory by UAHS in 2014.

Refs:

Monuments and Buildings Record  
<http://www.dia.ie>  
<http://www.theduncairn.com/>



## 2. CRUMLIN ROAD GAOL

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**Location:** Crumlin Road, Belfast, Co. Antrim  
**Status:** A  
**HB ref:** HB26/43/012  
**BHARNI ref:** 26/43/005  
**Saved:** 2012

A fantastic example of Victorian architecture, Crumlin Road Gaol was designed by Charles Lanyon c. 1845. The gaol is an early example of the 'pentonville radial plan, a significant development in prison architecture at the time'. The prison and facing contemporary courthouse remained in use until they closed in 1996 and faced an uncertain future while proposals for a new use were developed. Both landmark buildings were added to the BHARNI database and featured in BAR Vol. 6, p.30. Unlike the courthouse, the gaol was taken under the wing of OFMDFM and NBCP.

Restoration of the Gaol was made possible due to a funding from NIEA (now HED) Historic Building Grant aid, Heritage Lottery Fund, NI Executive OFMDFM funding and Social Investment Fund. This investment (totalling £8million) and support for Crumlin Road Gaol, this has resulted in the building being successfully developed into a visitor attraction and conference/event venue.

Crumlin Road Gaol reopened in December 2012 and has attracted over 300,000 visitors and had a positive impact on the built environment. The gaol was a fitting venue for the launch of Traditional Building Craft Skills: Assessing the Need, Meeting the Challenge – Skills Needs Analysis of the Built Heritage Sector in Ireland' a research report part funded by NIEA (now HED).

Refs:

Monuments and Buildings Record  
<http://www.dia.ie>  
<http://www.crumlinroadgaol.com/>

### 3. GORTINURE ROAD THATCH, MAGHERA

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**Location:** Maghera, Co. Londonderry  
**Status:** B1  
**HB ref:** HB08/01/021  
**BHARNI ref:** 08/01/003  
**Saved:** 2014

A relatively large, single-storey, three-bay, direct entry, vernacular thatched house containing some unusual features. The building is likely to date from the early part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Many features are of particular interest - intact thatched roof under a tin covering, the ground floor plan form with recesses for storage, the scullery shelf made from a stone slab, surviving historical plaster, and the corbeled top to the (now removed) wickerwork chimney. The building is a rare example of a large tenant farmers house largely unextended from its original construction.

It was identified as a building at risk in 2014 due to its partially ruinous state. However, the building's architectural and historic interest was recognised at it was sympathetically restored by a private owner, who also reinstated the thatch. The restoration project was made possible thanks to the project successfully securing a £28,465 Historic Building Grant from NIEA (now HED).

This building demonstrates the potential for vernacular thatch buildings to be protected and restored without sacrificing modern comforts.

#### 4. STABLES, SION HOUSE

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**Location:** Sion Mills, approx. 5km S of Strabane, Co. Tyrone  
**Status:** B2  
**HB ref:** HB10/07/001  
**BHARNI ref:** 10/07/004  
**Saved:** 2014

Hearth and Sion Mills Preservation Trust

Sion Mills is one of the most significant industrial heritage sites in Northern Ireland, established by the Herdman brothers in 1835. James Herdman was responsible for building Sion or Zion House, which took its present form in 1884. The stable block associated with the mid-19th century Elizabethan style 'manor house' at Sion Mills was built by William Unsworth, including the red brick stable block featuring a tiled roof and decorative bell-cote.

The stable block appeared in our first Buildings at Risk catalogue in 1993, when it was described as a 'building of great concern'. The building remained in a vulnerable state for many years, suffering deterioration and a widely publicised fire. Its distinctive roof collapsed five years after Northern Ireland's first Repairs Notice was served on the building and it had deteriorated to a worrying extent.

The building's fortune changed when it was eventually served with a compulsory purchase order and transferred to Hearth Revolving Fund. Hearth, in partnership with the Sion Mills Preservation Trust has now transformed the building into a museum and heritage education centre.

Refs:

Monuments and Buildings Record

<http://www.hearth-housing.org.uk/>

<http://www.sionstables.com/>





**Location:** Shipquay Street, Derry, Co. Londonderry  
**Status:** B1 Listed in Conservation Area (not Second surveyed)  
**HB ref:** HB01/19/034  
**BHARNI ref:** 01/19/034  
**Saved:** 2015

Dating from 1741, 31-33 Shipquay Street is known to be one of the oldest buildings in the walled city area of Derry. The mid-18<sup>th</sup> Century building has had a number of uses over the years, notably as a customs house at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. The brick faced Georgian façade is understated in nature, increasing from three-storey to four-storey aligning with the steepness of the street. However, the doorcase is a notable feature. The building was described by Alistair Rowan in *The Buildings of Ireland* as the ‘finest remaining 18<sup>th</sup> Century block in the city... with a fine pedimented doorcase that would not be out of place in Molesworth St or in the Bedford estate in London.’

The building sits at a prominent location on one of the main city centre arterial routes within the Walled City Conservation area. It was added to the BHARNI register in 2013 after having laid vacant for a number of years with a hope that its potential could be harnessed to bring social, environmental and economic benefits to the historic walled city area.

The challenge was undertaken by the Inner City Trust, with support from Derry and Strabane District Council. Inner City Trust was set up to develop the physical, economic and social regeneration of Derry. The Trust helped secure funding (including £125,000 from NIEA (now HED) to breathe new life into the previously vacant 31-33 Shipquay St, establishing it as The Fashion and Textile Design Hub in 2014. The Trust believes this investment will help create sustainable employment opportunities as well as provide comprehensive support for emerging fashion and textile designers. The building’s heritage value should boost the Centre’s attraction to businesses, investors and visitors to the city centre.

Refs:

Monument and Building Record  
<http://www.fashionanddesignhub.com/>

## 6. KNOCKBREDMA MAUSOLEUM

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**Location:** Knockbreda Churchyard, Belfast, Co. Antrim  
**Status:** B+ (Second Surveyed 2011)  
**HB ref:** HB25/16/005 B  
**BHARNI ref:** 25/16/001  
**Saved:** 2011

When it was first formed in 2006 the Follies Trust went through the then BARNI register and decided that the three mausolea at Knockbreda were the most worthy projects to launch us as a building preservation trust. While technically not *follies* we had included mausolea in the categories of small buildings we wanted to conserve. Fund raising was a huge issue as we were new and mausolea are not attractive to many funders but, with the help of the BHARNI Officer, Andrew McClelland, and funding and support from NIEA, now HED we succeeded!

Another very difficult project for the Follies Trust was the Beresford Obelisk, near Limavady. This was on private property and fund-raising again was an issue. A representative from NIEA, now HED, requested its addition to the BHARNI register which ensured we received funding and support. This project would not have succeeded if not on the register.

**Primrose Wilson, Chairman, Follies Trust.**

## 7. GRACEHILL OLD SCHOOL

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**Location:** Church Road, Gracehill, Co. Antrim  
**Status:** B2 (Not Second Surveyed)  
**HB ref:** HB07/15/011  
**BHARNI ref:** 07/15/001  
**Saved:** 2009

Gracehill Old School was on the BHARNI register and was the first building in Northern Ireland to receive an acquisition grant. This innovative pilot funding scheme was subsequently rolled out across Northern Ireland and led to the rescue of a number of buildings at risk.

Gracehill Old School itself was subsequently regenerated and it is now a very successful facility for both locals and visitors with a foot fall of over 25,000 per annum. It has been the catalyst for further regeneration in the area. The Trust also received funding to purchase the historic old village shop, also on the BHARNI register, which is now the subject of an ongoing restoration project. Almost £2 million pounds have now been raised and spent in the village of Gracehill, none of which would have been possible without BHARNI recognition and seed funding.

**Dr David Johnston, Chairman, Gracehill Old School Trust.**

## TIMELINE AND KEY EVENTS 1993-2016

The progress of the BHARNI project from 1993-2016 is outlined in the form of a timeline, below. Key milestones are noted and, where necessary elaborated on. Running throughout this timeline is maintenance of BHARNI database and register, and the provision of direct support from HED and UAHS, to the level, of 500+ contacts per annum (UAHS 2016). UAHS has also provided additional activity that links to, compliments and supports the project, its aims and objectives. These are marked with an asterisk\* below.

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**1993 Buildings at Risk Northern Ireland, BARNI project set up by UAHS, partnership with the Environment and Heritage Service, now renamed Historic Environment Division, (HED).**

**1993 Volume 1 Buildings at Risk Catalogue:**

The Buildings at Risk catalogues 1993-2008, provide a valuable snapshot of the condition of built heritage in Northern Ireland. The catalogues were initially created to raise awareness of buildings at risk with the hope of acting as a vehicle to match up potential owners with problem buildings. Over time the catalogue has developed to include inspiring saves and other achievements of BHARNI, along with helpful advice on how to protect and maintain heritage assets.

**1995 Volume 2 Buildings at Risk Catalogue**

**1996 Volume 3 Buildings at Risk Catalogue**

**1997 Volume 4 Buildings at Risk Catalogue**

**Traditional Building Skills Directory, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> edition**

The Directory of Traditional Building Skills draws together a wide selection of those working in the fields of historic building conservation, ranging from architects to quantity surveyors to specialist sub-contractors and skilled craftsmen. It aims to promote best practice for the care and protection of the historic environment in the re-use and regeneration of historic buildings including buildings at risk.

**1998 Volume 5 Buildings at Risk Catalogue**

**Tradition Building Skills Directory, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition**

**1999 Volume 6 Buildings at Risk Catalogue**

**Directory of Funds for Historic Buildings, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition**

**2000 SOS: Some Options and Solutions Conference and Report:**

Joint UAHS/HED one day conference looking at Built Heritage at Risk and associated report. Last commissioned report on the BHARNI, (then BARNI) project, by UAHS in association with the Environment and Heritage Service, now HED. The SOS report highlighted the following findings from the first 7 years:

- 137 'Good News' stories, (now referred to as 'removals');
- 371 Buildings at Risk;
- Highest percentage of 'at risk' houses, in particular 'urban' houses;
- Highest number of 'at risk' in County Down;
- At that time Grant Aid was offered only to grades A and B1.



The 2000 report also highlighted: importance of the legislative framework, the role of enforcement- Urgent Works and Repairs Notices, and 'problem buildings' and 'problem owners'. It presented the case that particular types of buildings presented particular need e.g. small scale vernacular, middle to large scale, and institutional and industrial buildings. It proposed optimism for progress for buildings at risk in the context of the of new Planning Policy Statement 6.

**2002 \*UAHS Complementary Project: 'Home & Dry':**

A UAHS event and seminar series on Historic Building Repair & Maintenance, funded by HLF and UAHS from 2002-12. This was not funded by BHARNI though heritage at risk was profiled, and members of HED were invited to speak at events. It complemented the BHARNI programme by raising awareness and assisted owners who had buildings at risk to find new uses and to learn about good practice in relation to historic buildings. For full details of the 'Home & Dry' events and seminar programme, see appendix 1.

**2003 Ten Point Protocol for care of the UK Government's Historic Estate:**  
Point 6:6 'Protect buildings at risk' specifically recommends that a strategy be agreed for each case, whether by repair reuse or disposal;

**2004 Online BARNI Public Access Portal launched by HED, database continues to be maintained by UAHS.**

**2005 Addition of Scheduled monuments to the BARNI Register.**

**Volume 7 Buildings at Risk Catalogue.**

**2006 Buildings at risk becomes Built Heritage at Risk (BHARNI).**

**BARNI Agreement and partnership between HED and UAHS renewed.**

**UAHS trials mini options appraisals for buildings at risk** – County Fermanagh and County Tyrone and supported by a free owners' seminar in Caledon.

**2007 \*UAHS Complementary Project: 'Lose or Reuse':**

A publication looking at re-use of heritage and how heritage-led regeneration can be managed sustainably. Funded by HLF:

[http://www.uahs.org.uk/cmsfiles/pdf/lose\\_or\\_reuse\\_managing\\_heritage\\_sustainably.pdf](http://www.uahs.org.uk/cmsfiles/pdf/lose_or_reuse_managing_heritage_sustainably.pdf)

**2008 BHARNI target included in the Programme for Government 2008-11**

**HED extend Grant Aid to grade B2 listed buildings for the first time in 20 years.**

**HED introduce Acquisition Grant Aid**

**HED ACQUISITION GRANT AID [PRE & SINCE 2008]:**

- Old Schoolhouse Gracehill
- St Malachy's Convent and school
- Belmont primary school
- Herdman's Mill- [portion of]
- McMaster street- 6 no terrace buildings
- Rosetta Cottages
- Drumbee Schoolhouse
- Gracehill Old Village Shop
- Good Shepherd Gatelodge



- Former Presbyterian Church Derry works
- 31-33 Shipquay Street Derry

**\*UAHS Complementary Project: 'Look Before You Leak'.**

Leaflets directed at homeowners and section of website with guidance on preventative maintenance. Funded by NIEA, DoE and UAHS.

**2011 Northern Ireland Audit Office Report: Safeguarding Northern Ireland's Listed Buildings.**

**2012 HED increase repair support from 35 to 45% of eligible works.**

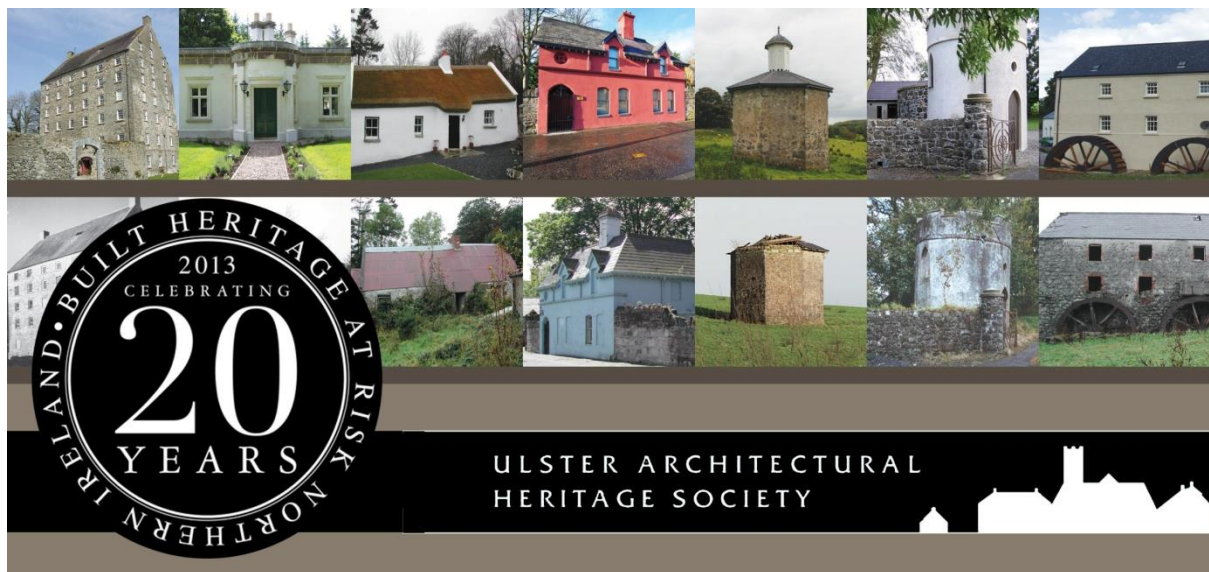
**2013 BHARNI Agreement and partnership between HED and UAHS renewed.**

**HED issue letters to owners:**

- Letters issued to owners of all Priority buildings Grades A-C, Councils copied in, together with BAR officer;
- Area Architects and BHARNI Officer Engagement with owners.

**\*UAHS Complementary Project: 'Quality Streets: Retrofitting Traditional Terraces'**

A project based on McMaster Street, former buildings at risk, demonstrating how a traditional red brick terrace can be successfully retrofitted and updated to meet modern living standards. Production of associated online video. Funded by NIEA, DoE Challenge Fund.



**Figure 1 Flyer celebrating 20 years of BHARNI, featuring before and after images of saved buildings and structures.**

**2014 UAHS launches new, online Directory of Traditional Building Skills, funded by NIEA, DoE;**

**HED announces cut backs to the availability of listed building grants, amidst proposal of cessation of listed building grants in the draft budget for 2015-16;**

**2015 Complete suspension of listed building grants and 50% cut to UAHS BHARNI resource allocation;**

**Implementation of local government reform and transfer of planning and enforcement to 11 local authorities;**

**Restructuring of central government departments: Historic Environment Division transferred from Department of the Environment, Northern Ireland Environment Agency to new Department for Communities;**

**\*UAHS Complementary Project: 'Making Heritage Projects Happen' 'Your Architecture, Your Heritage' 2015-16.**

UAHS, as part of review of the organisation through HLF 'Transition Fund' trialled various public and community engagement models in 2015-16. These consisted of 'Bring a Building' public engagement events and targeted capacity building events. Including 'Making Heritage Projects Happen', an event taking participants through the process of heritage led regeneration projects from purchase of heritage at risk, to funding, then construction, and long-term sustainable use.

**2016 Reduced reintroduction of listed building grant aid under the new Historic Environment Fund.**

**\*UAHS Complementary Project: 'Heritage Angel Awards for Northern Ireland' 2017-19.**

UAHS has, with participation and support from HED, led on the introduction of heritage awards to Northern Ireland, as already existing in England (Historic England) and Scotland (partnership through the Scottish Civic Trust). Specific emphasis on recognising individual heritage success stories, and best practice in the care and protection of the historic environment, in particular heritage at risk. Annual awards introduced for a 3 year period, from 2017-19.

## OTHER EVENTS & SEMINARS

- HOME & DRY – Historic Building Repair & Maintenance days , some in conjunction with BHARNI
  - 2001 - Historic Building Repair & Maintenance day- held at Dyan Mill, Dyan, Co.Tyrone and featuring a former historic building at risk and on BARNI
  - 2002 - Historic Building Repair & Maintenance day- held in Ballywalter Park, Co. Down and featuring care and maintenance of large historic houses
  - 30/8/2003 –Verbal Arts Centre, Derry
  - 13/9/2003 – Clotworthy Arts Centre, Antrim
  - HOME & DRY –30/9/2004 – A day for those who care for historic churches – held in St Matthews Church, Shankill Road, Belfast, and providing best advice on good maintenance practice for historic churches
  - HOME & DRY – 14/5/2005 – Living in small houses – held in Enniskillen and featuring good examples of sensitive restoration of small buildings
  - HOME & DRY – 17/9/2005 – Restoration – how to avoid it – in UFTM, Cultra and featuring professionals skilled in the conservation of historic buildings
  - HOME& DRY – Spotlight on Lime –19& 20 May 2006 – held in UFTM Cultra and featuring good practice on maintenance and demonstration on the use of lime in the repair of historic buildings
  - HOME & DRY – How to restore Traditional Buildings 29/9/ 2006 – held in partnership with Mourne Heritage Trust and featured visits with professionals to the award winning Mourne Homesteads project
  - 2007 BHARNI: preventative maintenance regimes by Harriet Devlin from the Ironbridge Institute
  - HOME & DRY IN Ormeau Baths gallery QUALITY MATTERS – QUALITY PAYS – 1/6/2007 – held in former Swimming Baths converted to an Arts Gallery
  - HOME & DRY – How to restore Traditional Buildings – held in Co.Donegal and including visits by boat to see traditional buildings on Gola Island
  - HOME & DRY – How to extend historic buildings – 18/5/2008 – held in Markethill, Co.Armagh and featuring one public and one private building which had been extended using best conservation principles
  - 2009 BHARNI/Home and Dry – ‘Wrecks to Riches’ seminar in the Verbal Arts Centre, Derry on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> October
  - 2010 BHARNI/Home and Dry – ‘Conserve Energy’ – how to conserve energy in historic buildings - Crescent Arts Centre, Belfast
  - 2011 BHARNI/Home and Dry – Richhill
  - HOME & DRY IN 2011 – Series of 5 lunchtime lecture on Traditional Skills
  - 2012 Heritage Time Conference - Making the most of our historic assets - making the most of our historic assets held in former BARNI Christ Church, College Square North

# 1. HERITAGE AT RISK IN UK AND IRELAND: A COMPARISON

## ENGLAND

### HERITAGE AT RISK (HAR)-HISTORIC ENGLAND

#### Key Statistics:

**Approximately 500,000 Listed Buildings;**  
**5431 'at risk' assets on the HAR register, including:**

- grade I and II\* listed secular buildings, 3.8% (849);
- listed places of worship, 6.3% (926);
- scheduled monuments, 13% (2,582);
- conservation areas, 6% (496);
- registered parks and gardens, 5.8% (95);
- registered battlefields, 13% (6);
- protected wreck sites, 12.2% (6).

The Heritage at Risk programme in England was established in 1990 by Historic England, then English Heritage. Historic England surveys on an ongoing basis and the Heritage at Risk register is updated and published online each year. The register in England includes grade I and II\* listed buildings, grade II listed buildings in London and Grade II listed places of worship, unlisted buildings in conservation areas, scheduled monuments, historic parks and gardens, battlefields and protected wrecks. Historic England targets grant aid at owners of risk structures that may find it difficult to gain grant assistance otherwise e.g. private owners.

Historic England works in partnership with Heritage Lottery Fund to help prioritise grants. Historic England also actively encourages local authorities in relation to heritage at risk through bespoke provisions including legal advice to help them exercise enforcement. Grant aid is also provided to local authorities for underwriting action. Recording, local council liaison, advice and support are facilitated by the '**Historic England Local Delivery Team**'.

The heritage at risk programme is also complimented by other initiatives by Historic England. For example, '**Heritage Action Zones**' an initiative that recognises historic places that have the potential to become focal points for sustainable economic development and community life. Working with local partners, Historic England aims to focus their help and resources on these places to bring them to life. Also the annual '**Heritage Angel Awards**', supported by Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation highlights potential and success of projects associated with buildings at risk. Historic England also produce a '**Heritage Counts**' annual audit on behalf of the Heritage Forum. Heritage Counts is a body of research and statistics produced annually to help better understand the historic environment and the challenges it faces. Online resource includes:

- Search the register;
- Selection Criteria, & terms and abbreviations;
- Download a regional register;
- Buildings at Risk for Sale;
- Designation Download Data-Download spatial data for HAR;
- Suggest a change to the HAR register.
- Separate mapviewer.

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/>

## SCOTLAND

### BUILDINGS AT RISK REGISTER (BARR) – HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND

#### Key Statistics:

**47,422 listed buildings**  
**2,521 'at risk' assets on the HAR register, including:**  
**-listed buildings-all grades,**  
**-conservation areas.**

#### Not including:

**-scheduled monuments,**

Buildings at Risk Register (BARR) Scotland was established 1991. Until 2007 Scotland operated similarly to Northern Ireland, in that the register was run on known buildings and not a systematic survey. Since 2007 Scotland has operated a systematic survey on a tri-annual cycle. The register in Scotland includes listed buildings, unlisted buildings in conservation areas but not scheduled monuments. Historic Environment Scotland offers grant aid to at risk structures, including the allocation of funds to 'City Trusts' for distribution in each locality. Historic Environment Scotland also focuses resources on field work, processing of data, advice & support, updating website. Online resource includes:

- Search the register;
- Headline statistics: Total BAR, total added, total saved, total demolished;
- Up to date information/condition of each entry with up to date photos;
- Targeted sections on 'featured building', 'success stories', 'in progress';
- Map search, powered by GIS, broken down into local authority;
- Data, including photographs is stored on National Collection of the Built Environment.

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/archives-and-collections/buildings-at-risk-register/>

## WALES

### BUILDINGS AT RISK – CADW

#### Key Statistics:

**29,986 listed buildings**  
**2,646 at risk' assets on the HAR register, including:**  
**-listed buildings-all grades,**  
**-conservation areas.**

#### Not including:

**-scheduled monuments,**

Established mid-1990s. Until 2012 the survey of buildings at risk in Wales was carried out by each local authority. Prior to 2012, the surveys were commissioned directly by local authorities with funding provided by CADW. However, at the end of 2012, to ensure a consistent approach across Wales, CADW, committed to undertake an all-Wales condition review of listed buildings over a five-year rolling period, surveying approximately 20% of listed buildings stock in Wales per year. This is served by external contract to total value of £250,000 or £50,000 per annum. The systematic programme of surveys will ensure that the condition of all 30,000 listed buildings in Wales during this period is assessed using consistent methodology.

All the information is on a central database and each local authority can access the data for its area. Information from survey is enhanced on an ongoing basis by known or local information as provided by local authorities and the team of Regional Inspectors. Currently, public access to the BAR register in Wales is not provided online or otherwise. Access to the data is only provided to the relevant local authority. There is a view to consider introducing public access to CADW's BAR register in the future.

<http://cadw.gov.wales/historicenvironment/recordsv1/buildingsatrisk/?lang=en>

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## IRELAND

### BUILDINGS AT RISK REGISTER - AN TAISCE

The Buildings at Risk Register is an unfunded, public participation project by An Taisce – the National Trust for Ireland, supported and maintained by its voluntary members. The Register was put in place in response to concern at the growing number of structures that are vacant and falling into a state of disrepair. The Register provides 'information on structures of architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest throughout the country that are considered to be at risk'.

<http://www.antaisce.org/issues/buildings-at-risk>

The risk criteria are similar to Northern Ireland. However, the register does not include monuments. A building will remain on the Register until restoration or demolition works are completed in full.

A Google map has been created to give the location of approximately 215 properties – those thought to be at most significant risk in 2014:

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?msa=0&mid=1tAeuNUd5ZD13U6dYmygQWT7oWLQ>

## 8. CONCLUSION:

This report presents a review the progress of BHARNI since 1993, with particular focus on the BHARNI project over the last 10 years, 2006-16. It offers comparison with the last comprehensive review in 2000, review within current context, and comparisons with other jurisdictions. This review shows that the BHARNI project has proven to be substantially successful, with opportunity for improvement in some areas. The recommendations bring together a consideration of both what has been achieved in the past and how best to benefit heritage at risk in the future.

The report shows that in excess of 487 built heritage assets are, or may be, at risk, a value rising since 2016. All 487 entries, represent an irreplaceable and non-renewable opportunity for Northern Ireland, and an historic and cultural asset that may be lost forever if there is no means or will to intervene. It is therefore essential that the BHARNI project continues to record and monitor buildings at risk and acts to encourage, or catalyse their re-use, repair and regeneration.

Undoubtedly the HED and UAHS partnership can regard the achievement of 192 removals against the target of 200 as a worthy achievement against the project aims. A high level of public engagement has been achieved through the BHARNI project as demonstrated by the level of activity through this, and its complementary projects. The consistent removal of approximately 20 entries per year is to be applauded and every effort should be made for this success to be sustained and increased over the coming years. More recent reduction in saves can be seen to correlate with the reduction of funding by way of listed building grant aid and reduction of the existing BHARNI project. This underscores the need for adequate allocation of resource to heritage at risk moving forward.

There has always been a need for targeted action on heritage at risk. This has been a feature of efforts since 2000, 'SOS- Some Options and Solutions'. This report has highlighted a continuing need to address key strands of issue including 'problem owners', 'problem types', the distribution of high levels of heritage at risk in particular local authority areas, and issues such as legislative framework, VAT, rates, etc. There remains an ongoing need for support to help owners to meet the requirements to care for their buildings set by law.

Some factors affecting Heritage at Risk in Northern Ireland remain somewhat consistent with those highlighted almost 17 years ago but the way in which these challenges might be approached, has changed enormously. It is proposed that a fresh approach to the BHARNI project is necessary, structured in the context of changes to local and central government: RPA reform in 2015 and associated redistribution of powers, the new PfG 2016-20, and the developing HED-heritage sector PfG Action Plan. It is proposed that in this context, change presents challenges and opportunity for heritage at risk in Northern Ireland.

This report highlights the need to move towards a more consistent and systematic means of managing the BHARNI register. This to incorporate better frameworks for recording and monitoring the condition of heritage at risk, better means of disseminating information and delivering public/owner engagement/information, and better ways of using the register and associated data to make an ongoing argument for the value and importance of the historic environment in Northern Ireland going forward.

It is evident that these are actions that still require the attention of UAHS as the lead NGO, Central and, most recently Local government. Reform of Public Administration in 2015, placed local authorities as a new lead within their localities, and the project should adapt to ensure that the potential and enthusiasm enabled by change is harnessed in full. Of particular importance is the need to engineer better working links between the structure of the existing BHARNI NGO-HED partnership and a consistent provision of information and support across local councils so that opportunities for best value outcomes within local government are optimised. A formal 3 way partnership between the 11 local authorities, and NGO and HED is proposed as a key recommendation.



However it is acknowledged that the heritage at risk issue, now sits properly within the wider context of the needs, potential and progress of the wider community and cultural historic environment in Northern Ireland, and must be considered as such. This is particularly important in light of the outcome based approach of the draft PfG 2016-20, which though it does not have a specific indicator aligned to heritage does offer the opportunity to demonstrate how heritage can contribute across the aims of government. The central government ongoing commitment to legislation for the protection architecturally and historically significant buildings and monuments must also be upheld.

The Heritage at Risk project continues to be the lead guide on care for Northern Ireland's heritage assets- at the moment mainly listed buildings, with the potential to expand. With the disincentives of VAT, rates and heritage deficit, the BHARNI project remains a key component in highlighting and prioritisation of need for owners, funders and initiatives of central and local government. The decline of saves in the 2015-16 period, suggests that without a system of monitoring, promotion and funding of heritage at risk, more buildings will be lost.

A combination of HED, NGO and local authorities working together in a mutually beneficial and cost effective partnership to fund and achieve the aims and objectives of the heritage at risk project is proposed as the optimum path to achieving best value practical and sustainable results. To attain the required level of impact for the historic environment, the various possible options for a future heritage at risk project must be properly resourced to achieve results against the above recommendations. While it is acknowledged that Northern Ireland is working in constrained times, indecision and delay in acting on the opportunities presented in this report will seriously jeopardise a core income generator for NI. Our built heritage and the way it fixes our history in communities and cultural, natural and urban landscapes is irreplaceable. Failure to act to protect and enhance heritage will be at a cost- socially, culturally, economically- to our generation, and Northern Ireland's generations to come.



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