



DEFEND  INSPIRE

ULSTER ARCHITECTURAL
HERITAGE SOCIETY

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The UAHS wishes to thank the following companies for their sponsorship and support:

BATIK Creative Design Store

Cleaver Fulton Rankin

Consarc Design Group

Hall Black Douglas Architects

Manor Architects

Planning Online

Have a look at our new website

www.uahs.org.uk

Free advice and support for owners is available at

www.homeanddry.info

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The continued use and reuse of our historic buildings is inherently sustainable and we can all help to offer these vulnerable assets a lifeline.





It is widely recognised that historic buildings help to boost the local economy and improve our quality of life by creating environments where people want to live, work and visit.

HISTORIC BUILDINGS:

Provide a focus for regeneration

Heritage-led regeneration is recognised as a central economic and social policy throughout Europe.

Establish our identity

Our historic buildings create places of character and interest that are **somewhere** rather than **anywhere**.

Are key to the promotion of cultural tourism

Visitors are drawn to authentic places with a tangible sense of history.

Form an important but threatened part of our heritage

In the 1950s, 30,000 thatched buildings existed in Northern Ireland; fewer than 200 remain.

Are environmentally sustainable

It is demonstrably better in sustainability terms to reuse existing buildings rather than to replace them.

Help create skilled local jobs

There is a growing demand for, but an acute shortage of, workers skilled in traditional building techniques.



WHAT GOVERNMENT CAN DO TO SUPPORT THIS VALUABLE RESOURCE:

Strengthen policy supporting the reuse of buildings

There are currently 38,000 empty dwellings and over 450 historic buildings at risk in Northern Ireland. Many fine buildings in our towns and cities also have vacant upper floors.

Provide grant aid for B2 listed buildings

Less than 50% of listed buildings in Northern Ireland currently have access to historic building grant aid.

Reduce the VAT charged on maintenance and repairs

Residential conversions of redundant buildings already benefit from VAT reductions but much more could be done.

Employ more conservation officers

Planning Service lacks specialist staff to look after our conservation areas and areas of townscape character.

Robustly enforce planning breaches

The highest fine to date for the unauthorised demolition of a listed building in Northern Ireland is £5,000.

Introduce third party right of appeal

This is crucial in order to create a fair planning system and improve the quality of decision-making.