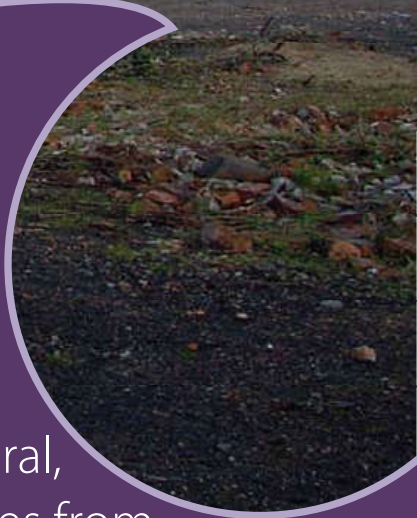




Built Heritage

Built heritage is a major part of the historic environment that plays a key role in illustrating the development of our country's economy and society in a way in which no other resource can. This chapter provides indicators on listed buildings and historic monuments.

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Northern Ireland's built heritage is remarkably diverse. It provides evidence of agricultural, industrial and settlement changes from 9,000 years ago to the present day (see **Our Changing Environment**). There are distinct benefits from a sensitive approach to the management of the historic environment for culture, tourism and a sustainable economy.

The landscape in Northern Ireland is influenced greatly by our historic environment and the two are inseparably linked (see [Land and Landscape Management](#)). The monuments and buildings, which we have inherited from our ancestors, are important spiritual and visual landmarks. These range from early examples of burial sites to relatively modern structures, but each contributes to the overall character of a place as well as containing a range of archaeological and scientific information such as objects indicative of culture activity, pollen which can be used to reconstruct climatic conditions and dietary data.

In the rural and post-industrial areas of Northern Ireland entire communities may have been associated with for instance, the linen industry, where now only ruined mills and perhaps former workers' houses remain. Retaining monuments and buildings therefore becomes a vital and unique backdrop for communities, but the future of those structures must be secured if future economic and social benefits are to be gained. For example, in Limavady a redundant hospital building has been restored and reused as a community development project. This has preserved and given a sustainable new use to the best example of a nineteenth century workhouse in Northern Ireland.

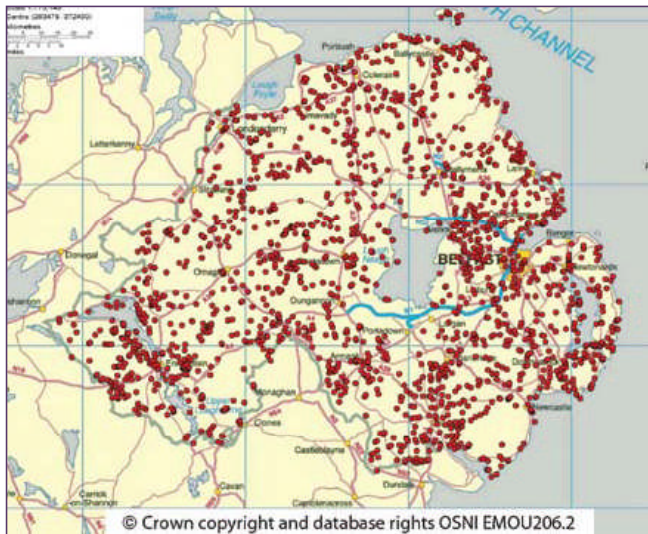
This diversity of built heritage features contributes significantly to the quality of our environment and is described in table BH1 below.

Table BH1: Built Heritage Features and Site Numbers (2005) (Source EHS)

Feature	Number	Description
Monuments in State Care	183 (2007)	Monuments in State Care are historic monuments which are fully maintained by the state. They are among the sites and monuments which are of the greatest importance within Northern Ireland. They may be fully owned by the state or within its guardianship.
Scheduled Historic Monuments	1,661	Scheduled Historic Monuments are also considered to be of great importance to Northern Ireland. They include megalithic tombs, large and small prehistoric ritual earthworks, occupation sites and defensive earthwork structures. More recent features include complex church sites, stone castles and abbeys from the medieval period.
Listed Buildings	8,284* (2007)	Listed Buildings are defined as buildings of special architectural or historic interest and date principally to the past three hundred years. They include many structures from post boxes, bridges, simple thatched cottages, and large stately homes, to commercial and industrial buildings. The purpose of listing is to protect the special interest of the building. A listed building or structure is at risk when its condition and management is deemed to be poor and unsustainable, placing the building or structure under threat of deterioration and/or demolition. Such listed buildings, structures and some monuments are recorded on an on-line database Built Heritage at Risk in Northern Ireland (BHARNI). * However, because many listings may include multiple buildings, such as terraces or farm buildings under a single listing reference, the total number of listed buildings is greater than this figure and is estimated to be about 8,500 structures.

Feature	Number	Description
Area of Significant Archaeological Importance, Conservation Areas, Areas of Townscape Character and Local Landscape Policy Areas	10 and 59 respectively*	Historic landscapes and townscapes may be designated in their own right either as an Area of Significant Archaeological Importance, as a Conservation Area, an Area of Townscape Character or a Local Landscape Policy Area. These area-based categories provide evidence of group value, where the character of an area is of specific historic value for reasons of association, integrity or uniqueness. These range in scale from city and town centres to villages, and small parks and streets. * Areas of Townscape Character and Local Landscape Policy Areas numbers are expanding rapidly as part of the area plan work currently being carried out by Planning Service. Detailed numbers will be provided on these assets in future reports.
Parks, Gardens and Demesnes	154 registered 150 supplementary list; 700 Heritage Gardens Inventory	The effect of design over time and of a high quality on an area of land is at the basis of the designation of an historic park, garden or demesne. These may vary considerably in style, age and size, and are typically associated with an historic building of similar heritage value.
Sites and Monuments	Approx 16,000	Sites and monuments include megalithic tombs, large and small prehistoric ritual earthworks, occupation sites and defensive earthwork structures. The most significant examples are protected as Scheduled Historic Monuments (see above)
Historic Buildings	Over 9,000 on buildings database	EHS has recorded information on a wide sample of historic buildings in order to isolate the buildings of special architectural and historic interest for listing. Over time the Buildings Database which is accessible online will contain information on all of these structures as well as listed buildings.
Industrial heritage	Approx 15,000	The Industrial Heritage Record includes many water and steam-powered mills, several important canals and the remains of a once very extensive railway system.
Defence heritage features and battlefields	650 and 330 respectively	Defence heritage refers to the number of 20th century defence structures throughout Northern Ireland including include trenches, gun and search emplacements, pillboxes, observation posts, airfields, harbours, naval and flying boat bases and air raid shelters.
Maritime Heritage	Over 3,000 shipwrecks	The coast and surrounding sea in Northern Ireland holds a great deal of archaeological evidence, providing links to our maritime past. All objects of historical or archaeological importance on the foreshore and sea bed to 12 nautical miles offshore are protected. Historic wrecks and/or the objects associated with these can also be designated. The EHS has established a Maritime Record to preserve and promote these sites.

Figure BH1: Monuments in State Care and Scheduled Historic Monuments (Source EHS)



Driving Forces and Pressures

Northern Ireland's built heritage has been well preserved up to the 20th century due to slow population growth and cultural factors such as the strong superstitions of earlier generations which inhibited the removal or destruction of certain features. However the last 100 years has seen greater pressures on the built environment as our economic structure changes and agricultural, building and industrial practices alter, and continue to do so.

The most significant of these pressures are agriculture, housing and development and tourism.

Archaeology and built heritage resources in rural areas tend to be most susceptible to, and be affected by, impacts associated with **agriculture**, particularly those arising from cultivation, but also trampling and other effects of livestock and machinery. Historic buildings and other above ground historic structures are also subject to decay and deterioration due to a lack of maintenance, unsuitability for modern use, or inappropriate alterations. Research carried out by EHS in 1998⁷⁵ highlighted that there had been a widespread loss of historic buildings in the countryside since 1908. In recent years the loss of non listed historic buildings has continued.

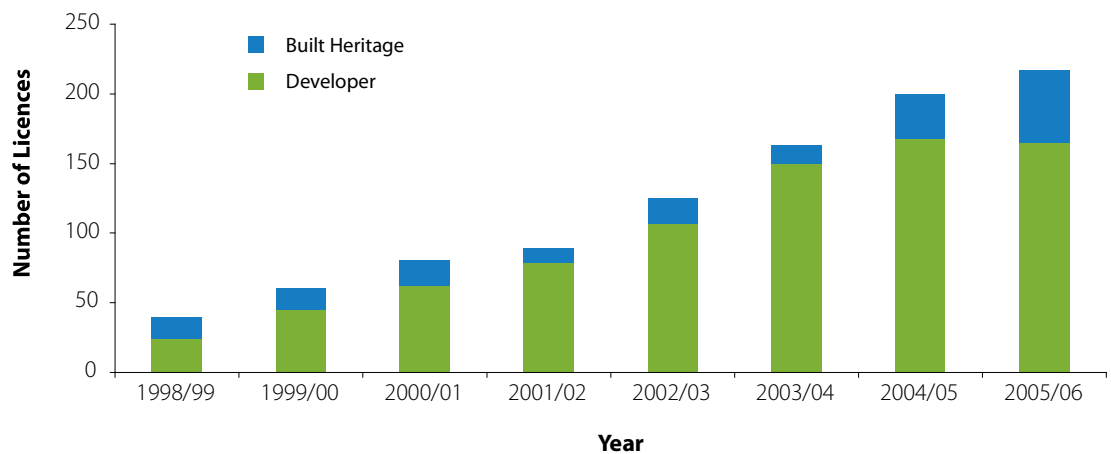
The **demand for housing** in Northern Ireland is still rising steadily and an increase in general development puts potential pressure on the historic environment. There has been a major rise in overall planning consultations since 2000 as the economy of the region has improved. This is particularly evident in terms of its impact on listed buildings, scheduled monuments, and buried archaeology in city centres, semi-urban areas and the urban fringe, but also the open countryside and coast.

Listed buildings, and wider historic environments, can provide the focus for regeneration, which when carried out sympathetically can promote our heritage while enhancing the use and setting of buildings. However, pressures on the use of land, its value, and relative redevelopment costs, may lead to abandonment, or demolition of buildings in favour of new build. Once lost, heritage structures cannot be replaced and so it is

important that the most appropriate decisions are made. Protection of such sites through planning policy and action taken for inappropriate works has been enhanced in recent years.

Known archaeological sites are considered in the planning process and there is a presumption in favour of their preservation. Suspected archaeological sites are excavated in advance of development. Figure BH2 shows the increase in the number of archaeological excavations over time, presented as the number of licences issued.

Figure BH2: Number of Archaeological Excavation Licences (1998/99-2005/06) (Source EHS)



Historic sites and areas are themselves a **tourist attraction**. The potential of this part of our environment to be exploited has further scope to be realised but most assets will have a limit to their capacity to absorb and to cope with numbers of visitors, especially where these are fragile, and the visitor demand is high. With increasing numbers of potential visitors, and demands for modern visitor facilities, there is an increased likelihood of negative impacts from accidental damage, wear and tear and inappropriate development of facilities particularly at key heritage sites.

BUILT HERITAGE INDICATORS

Policy and legislative context

Since the late 19th century progressive legislative measures have been introduced to protect historic monuments, buildings and sites through the planning process. Responsibilities lie with Planning Service and EHS.

Area Plans will often designate specific local heritage features for protection and may introduce tailored local policies. Regional Policies also exist in regard to heritage assets which are not protected by statute, especially Planning Policy Statement 6 *Archaeology and the Built Heritage* (PPS 6). This means that EHS is consulted by Planning Service in regard to planning applications which may affect archaeological sites and monuments of local importance and non listed vernacular buildings.

Monuments in State Care are protected by virtue of their ownership or guardianship by the state. The State is responsible for all decisions made on the structure.

Historic monuments are protected by the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (NI) Order 1995. Those included in the Sites and Monuments Record are protected by built heritage policies published in Planning Policy Statement 6. Scheduling protection is intended for features in private ownership, but cannot be applied to occupied buildings or churches in use for worship, and includes those on the foreshore and the seabed.

No works may be undertaken which may affect a scheduled monument without first obtaining Scheduled Monument Consent. Historic shipwrecks may be designated under the protection of Wrecks Act 1975. Maritime archaeology is also protected from marine dredging and construction activities under Part II of the Food and Environmental Protection Act (1985).

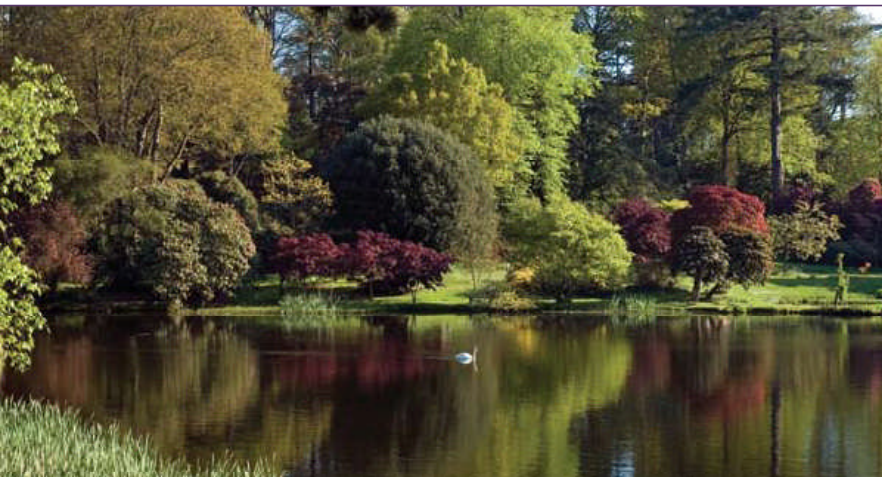
The Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991, enables **lists of buildings of special architectural or historic interest** to be compiled by EHS. In choosing buildings to be listed, criteria including the age of the building, its condition, style, proportion, ornamentation, plan form, spatial organisation, aesthetic quality, structural system, innovatory qualities, alterations, interior character, setting, and group value are taken into account. The building's historical associations, historical importance, social importance and scarcity are also considered.

The purpose of listing is to protect the special interest identified in a building including its setting. This does not mean it must remain unmodified, as most buildings need a function to survive, and changes of use often necessitate alterations and extensions. The legislation, however, places the main responsibility for achieving protection and preservation of listed buildings on their owners.

EHS advises Planning Service and owners on the treatment of listed buildings, with the objective that any changes or additions do not adversely affect the essential character of the building or its setting. Controls also prevent adjacent development from adversely affecting the setting of a listed property.

In conjunction with EHS, the Ulster Architectural Heritage Society has compiled an online Register of Built Heritage at Risk in Northern Ireland (BHARNI). The Register highlights listed buildings whose future seems threatened through dereliction or neglect and may be suitable for restoration and repair. Recently, a number of scheduled monuments whose condition gives cause for concern were also included.

The Northern Ireland Sustainable Development Strategy sets a target of removing 200 buildings from the BHARNI register over the next ten years. This can be actively supported by the provision of access to finance and support for preservation trusts and for others to help with the restoration of such structures, and to assist conservation officers and historic property owners in reducing the likelihood of there being more structures at risk.



Ornamental Lake - Mount Stewart

The Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991 protects **historic parks, gardens and demesnes** through a register maintained by EHS. This affords protection for the structures, design and features of historic designed landscapes. Parks, gardens and demesnes are protected by designation within Area Plans and by Planning Policy Statement 6.

In future, parkland will be recognised for its wildlife value through a Habitat Action Plan, which will be monitored and reported against as part of the Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy.

Conservation Areas are designated under the Planning Order 1991 as areas of special architectural or historic interest. The purpose of designation is to protect the special interest identified in an area including its setting. This does not mean it must remain unmodified, the legislation however seeks the maintenance or enhancement of the character defined in the area in any works.

Planning Service administers the designation and management of this heritage asset.

Areas of Townscape Character, Local Landscape Policy Areas and Areas of Archaeological Potential are defined by policy in and are identified on Area Plans. Planning Policy Statement 6 defines these designations. EHS often contributes expert advice to the consideration of these areas.

The industrial era has left an additional legacy of sites such as mills, railways and canals, some of which are also protected by scheduling, while others are listed. The schedule is compiled and maintained by EHS and such sites are similarly protected under Planning Policy Statement 6.

Indicator BH1: Monuments and Sites

Number of Scheduled Historic Monuments (2007)

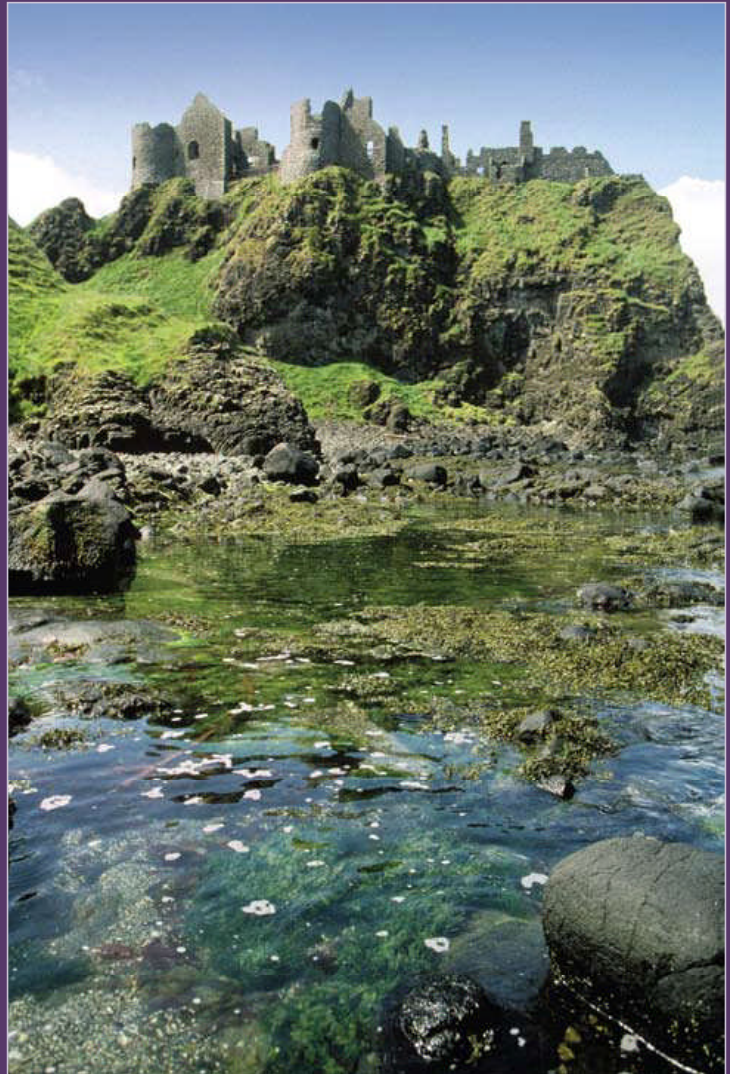
Monuments and sites provide evidence of pre-historic and historic cultural activity and processes. They may range from visible fortifications and ruins, to below ground archaeological sites spread across wide tracts of land. Monuments may also be located in maritime environments.

Box BH1: Dunluce Castle

Dunluce Castle is one of Northern Ireland's best known and most photographed monuments, often used to promote the region and its visitor attractions. It is dramatically situated on a basalt cliff, high above often stormy seas with excellent views over the surrounding coastline. The castle probably dates from the early 16th century, although the presence of an Early Christian souterrain shows that the headland was occupied much earlier. It is best known as a stronghold of the McDonnell Earls of Antrim and was besieged and taken in 1584 before being recaptured by the famous Sorley Boy McDonnell soon afterwards.

Despite its exposed location, Dunluce witnessed a series of remarkable architectural developments by successive McDonnells. These included an Italian-style loggia, a Scottish-style gatehouse, a bay-windowed manor house and a formal garden to the west of the castle. Despite these fashionable developments, the castle had a relatively short history and has been largely unoccupied since the late 17th century following the collapse of the kitchen wing into the sea. Several adjacent features are protected by scheduling, including the deserted village to the west of the castle and the parish church to the south.

Dunluce is one of our flagship historic monuments. Facilities include a visitor centre and shop, site guides and a refurbished audio-visual theatre. The biggest threat to the monument comes from its dramatic setting. The cliffs on which the monument is set are subject to continual erosion and EHS has commissioned several phases of cliff stabilisation in recent years.



Data

The first monuments were taken into care by the state in 1882 and there are 183 sites and monuments cared for by EHS in 2007. Some sites have staffed visitor facilities, with specific opening hours and entrance charges, but most are un-staffed. Many are in relatively remote locations.

There were some 1,661 scheduled historic monuments in the baseline year and the scheduling programme is ongoing. In addition to the number of monuments and archaeological sites protected by their designation, the Monuments and Buildings Record contains evidence and records of around 16,000 further sites and monuments dating to before 1700 AD, which do not have statutory protection but which are protected by planning and /or agricultural policy.

No scheduled historic monuments have been destroyed since the late 1990s and the management of the majority is of a sufficient standard to ensure that their protected status is upheld. For the 1,661 historic monuments that are scheduled, around 420 Field Monument Warden reports were completed for 2005, with an assessment of whether a monument's condition is improving or deteriorating.

Box BH2: McArts Fort

McArt's Fort is the best known of a number of scheduled historic monuments located on the upper slopes of Cavehill overlooking Belfast. It consists of a localised basalt promontory, cut off from the adjoining land by a pair of enclosing banks either side of a ditch with an entrance causeway to the north-west. The site has not been accurately dated, although its dramatic location suggests it may be a promontory fort from the late Bronze or Iron Ages. It has also been suggested that the monument may be part of the Early Christian (approx. 9th century) royal complex of the kings of Lough Laig.



Comment

The condition of scheduled monuments is assessed regularly. These records will enable future assessment of changes over time. The full report of the Condition and Management Survey of the Archaeological Resource (CAMSAR) for Northern Ireland will be published in 2008. This survey has sampled 1,500 sites across Northern Ireland, and the survey will enable a fuller assessment of the state of these sites to be made in future.

Indicator BH2: Listed Buildings

Number of Listed Buildings and Number at Risk (2007)

Listed buildings are those of special architectural or historic interest, and provide an indication of the extent of our historical resource. Those most at risk from deterioration or demolition provide a measure of the state of our historic environment.

Policy

The Sustainable Development Strategy sets a target of removing 200 buildings from the BHARNI register over the next ten years.

Data

The first survey for the identification of buildings with historic significance, which concentrated on all buildings in Northern Ireland erected before 1914, was completed in 1993. A 'Second Survey' of all historic buildings commenced in 1997, and is providing more detailed records, including an assessment of the buildings' interiors. It is anticipated that the survey will take at least nine more years to complete.

The most recent survey has recorded and surveyed approximately 5197 buildings in detail to the end of 2005/06. This represents coverage of 103 wards out of the 526 in Northern Ireland. An additional 333 buildings were listed as a result of the survey between 1997 and March 2006.

In 2007, the total number of statutory listings in Northern Ireland was 8,284. However, because many listings may include multiple buildings, such as terraces or farm buildings under a single listing reference, the total number of listed buildings is greater than this figure and is estimated to be about 8,500 structures.

Box BH3: Listed Buildings explained

Grade A

Buildings of national importance including both outstanding grand buildings and the fine, little altered example of some important style or date.

Grade B+

Buildings that might have merited A status but for relatively minor detracting features such as impurities of design, or lower quality additions or alterations. Also buildings that stand out above the general mass of grade B1 buildings because of exceptional interiors or some other features.

Grade B1 and Grade B2

Buildings of local importance or good examples of some period of style. Some degree of alteration or imperfection may be acceptable.



Markethill Courthouse before



Markethill Courthouse after

The BHARNI register provides an indicator of changes in the number of buildings judged to be at risk. In 2005, there were 456 buildings and structures on the BHARNI database; for the year 2006/07, 32 listed buildings were removed from the database in total, and are no longer at risk.

Comments

The BHARNI database is considered to be a reasonable guide to this issue in Northern Ireland, but it has been compiled from empirical research and is not systematic. As Northern Ireland's heritage is reviewed in a systematic way over coming years a fully accurate picture will emerge. This is likely to result in the discovery of extra heritage structures which are considered to be 'at risk'.

In future overall losses of listed buildings, and the rates of change in different types, such as shops, hotels, pubs and homes, will provide a more detailed picture of the state of listed buildings.

Key Challenges

EHS has extensive listing and recording programmes for buildings and monuments but data are not comprehensively available on the condition of these sites. Further development of indicators will improve reporting on the condition of our built heritage and also on the extent and condition of areas protected for their heritage importance.

Overall recording of heritage has shown improvement. Identification of many new heritage sites occurred through surveys and some other large-scale regional studies in recent years. A significant increase in the number of heritage places and resources recorded and surveyed generally has occurred.

The condition of scheduled monuments is assessed regularly. These records will enable future assessment of changes over time. A fuller picture of the condition of monuments will be reported through the Condition and Management Survey of the Archaeological Resource for Northern Ireland.

To protect and promote archaeological sites in maritime environments, EHS has established a Maritime Record and, in partnership with the University of Ulster at Coleraine, has set up a Centre for Maritime Archaeology to carry out a survey of the coastal zone, foreshore and seabed. This will provide information on the currently largely unrecorded and unprotected maritime archaeological resource.

Those listed buildings most at risk from dereliction or neglect are being identified and positive steps have been taken to reduce their number, with some success, although a significant number remain. A lack of systematic monitoring means that there is a risk that unprotected buildings worthy of listing may be lost or damaged before surveys are complete.

The Second Survey of buildings of architectural and historic interest was reviewed in detail during 2006 and 2007, at the end of its first ten years. The review concluded that the current area based approach is the most holistic and the most efficient way to conduct the survey. It also identified that one-off or ad hoc listing surveys should be carried out for urgent cases. To date, 36 such buildings have been identified for full survey.

There are a number of challenges in the management of the historic environment. It plays a key role in sustainable development and it is essential to continue programmes of recording and surveying, which may be used to help to target resources and action effectively.

Potential threats include current site and property values, and the resultant development pressures. In the case of listed buildings, the opportunities afforded by their acquisition and restoration should be promoted. An increase in regulations to improve, for example, energy efficiency and accessibility requirements may also be cause for concern. A balance may be achieved through seeking advice to address these requirements whilst retaining special architectural interest. The historic context and surroundings of developments should also be considered in new build activities.

As development pressures increase, a better understanding of why our historic built environment is important, and how best to reuse and regenerate historic buildings, including economic incentives, should be explored and promoted. Our built heritage represents a fragile resource, which when damaged and lost, is irreplaceable.

REFERENCE

75 A Sense of Loss EHS

