

Carrickfergus

Townscape Heritage Initiative



Information Booklet



What is the Carrickfergus Townscape Heritage Initiative?

The Carrickfergus Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) is a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) regeneration programme co funded by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council and others.

It centres on town centre properties within the town wall boundary of the Carrickfergus Conservation Area.

The initiative will offer a total common fund of up to £2.4m grant aid available to the owners of eligible properties to aid restoration in bringing buildings and shopfronts back to life.

The resulting investment in the fabric of the town centre will help stimulate more trade and raise the profile of the historic town making Carrickfergus a better place to live, work or visit.

It's not just about physical restoration, the THI scheme also offers opportunities to learn and engage with the town's heritage, through training at two levels:

- i) Educational activity to create greater understanding of the town's quality architecture.**
- ii) Wider activity and training related to heritage and restoration.**

Wherever possible, we aim to support local services, labour and products throughout the delivery of the programme, further strengthening skills and employment in the area. We will promote community involvement through regular activities and events, to help raise awareness of the rich heritage of Carrickfergus.

See page 6
for grant
eligibility

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Why Carrickfergus?

Carrickfergus is famed for its castle and coastal setting and was once the capital of Anglo-Norman Ulster. Laid out to a 12th Century plan it has been the focal point of some of the most important events impacting on the history of the Province of Ulster.

While the town has evolved over successive centuries, several early period landmarks including the Castle, Saint Nicolas's Church and sections of the defensive stone town walls completed in 1615 remain to this day. However, the impact of 20th is particularly noticeable, when industrial development, house building and road infrastructure radically altered the character of the medieval town.



Artist's impression of Carrickfergus in 1620 (Image courtesy of NIEA)

Although its core is medieval in origin the appearance of the town is now predominately of late 18th to mid 19th century character. Buildings are typically domestically scaled terraces of two to three storeys over ground floor shops in keeping with the essential characteristics of a Georgian town of this period.

It is the aim of the Townscape Heritage Initiative to restore the pride in the buildings once again, through restoration and regeneration. The THI can help create a welcoming historic environment where locals and visitors alike can find out more about the fascinating history of this special town and the stories of the people and buildings behind it.

What difference can the THI Make?

- Provide opportunity for eligible building owners and tenants to apply for grant funding.
- Embrace the principles of 'Conservation Area' requirements and heritage methods, and where eligible, offer grants to undertake works to their premises.
- Support complementary schemes to help Carrickfergus meet the challenges of changing retail habits and support new uses for buildings.
- Boost confidence and pride, building upon the strong medieval history of the town and ensuring stability for the future.

Community Involvement

The local community will be involved throughout the implementation of the THI scheme. Through training and educational activities including working with local schools and interest groupings the THI will develop upon the significant interest the local community already have in their built heritage.

Activities will aim to:

- **Widen knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the towns heritage, both locally and nationally.**
- **Offer opportunities for a variety of partners to come together to enjoy and utilise the buildings within the THI area.**
- **Actions to create a high quality, attractive environment for people to live, work, and visit, which will benefit the town as a whole.**

Carrickfergus Conservation Area

The Townscape Heritage Initiative target area sits within the Carrickfergus Conservation Area, which is an area of special architectural and historic interest. Conservation Area designation introduces control over the demolition of unlisted property in the area and affords protection to trees. The Carrickfergus Conservation Area contains several buildings with listed building status and for the most part the eligible properties targeted by the THI are not listed and are typically two or three storey townhouse scaled terraced buildings.

The THI will seek to repair and restore historic buildings whilst providing a long term viable use for them. To do this the THI will seek to provide training for building owners, the community and local construction businesses to promote the importance of traditional skills, materials and understanding.

THI Grant Eligibility

Twenty nine properties within the THI area have already been identified as eligible and prioritised. These include well known properties such as the former Kelly's Coal-yard building and Dobbins Hotel. In addition seventeen

reserve properties have been identified and owners/tenants of these may be invited to apply as the THI scheme progresses dependent on whether uptake from priority projects is not as high as expected.

Property owners and tenants (tenants with a minimum of a 10 year lease) can apply for grant aid funding for works on their properties which could include:

- **Exterior repairs to properties, including structural works.**
- **The restoration and reinstatement of architectural features, such as traditional shop fronts.**
- **Bringing empty space within buildings back into use, such as unused space above shops or derelict parts of buildings.**

Where a property is in use the grant may cover up to 60% of the cost of eligible repair/ structural works and 75% for reinstatement of architectural features.

For vacant properties/floor space the standard grant rate is a 45% grant but could work out higher dependent on whether the 'development' calculation is utilised

See back cover for eligible properties

Categories of Work Supported

Buildings work eligible for THI support could include one or a combination of following grants headings depending on the scale and nature of works concerned.

Building Repair

(60% grant rate)

- **Structural repairs**
- **Roof repairs**
- **Chimney repairs**
- **Rainwater goods repairs**
- **Stone and brickwork repairs**
- **Render repairs**
- **Window and door repairs**

Architectural Repairs

(75% grant rate)

- **Chimney reinstatement**
- **Sliding sash windows reinstatement**
- **Shopfront replacement**
- **Removal of external roller shutters**
- **Shop signage**
- **Iron railings reinstatement**
- **Stone paving reinstatement**

Reuse of Empty Space

(fixed 45% grant rate or alternative 'development' calculation)

- **Internal building fabric repairs**
- **Insulation**
- **Upgrading services**
- **Re-wiring and plumbing**
- **Reinstatement of architectural details**

Other Costs & Fees

In addition if the application is approved by the THI Project Board the cost of professional architectural support and other related costs and fees may be eligible at 75% grant rate. In all instances no retrospective grant awards will be issued for works or fees already commenced.

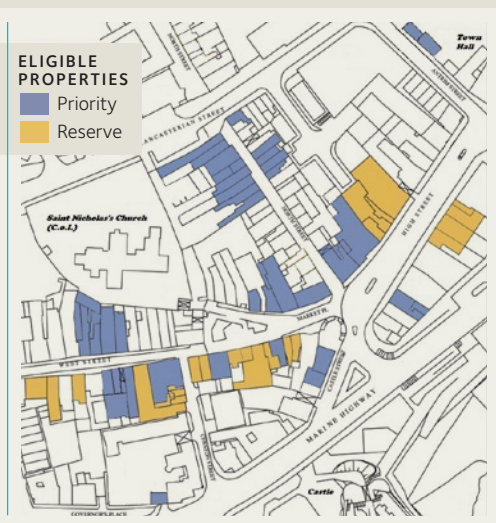
Application Process

Potential applicants will be advised on the application and assessment process used by the Carrickfergus THI Project Board as managed by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council.

For further information on any of the above or to express your interest please contact the THI Officer.



Carrickfergus THI area



Initiative supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, co-funded and managed by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council via a THI Project Board including nominees from Carrickfergus Regeneration Partnership.
www.hlf.org.uk | www.carrickfergusregenerationpartnership.com

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