



Comhairle Cathrach  
& Contae **Luimnigh**

**Limerick** City  
& County Council

Seirbhísí Pleanála agus Comhshaoil,  
Comhairle Cathrach agus Contae Luimnigh,  
Tuar an Daill,  
Luimneach

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**February 26, 2018**

**Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor D. Butler**

**I call, at the next Meeting, on Limerick City and County Council to develop an inventory of all Limerick's historical and artistic assets to ensure their preservation and to exploit their potential as tourist attractions and encourage civic pride.**

Dear Cllr. Butler,

This response was prepared in respect of your Notice of Motion, which has been referred to the Cultural Strategic Policy Committee for consideration.

The Architectural Conservation Unit welcomes the interest expressed in the Council's historical assets. These can range from archaeological sites throughout the city and county, to picturesque ruins in the countryside (which can have deep meaning for exiles from this land) through to terraced houses of classical proportions on our streetscapes to former police barracks in our towns and villages. Other assets can include contents, which are unknown to most, but where owners are anxious to ensure that they can be put at the Council's disposal in the interests of the common good, and range from paintings to documents, to artefacts associated with historical figures. The current Decade of Centenaries is also a factor prompting a renewed interest in our more recent past.

2018 sees a number of significant anniversaries here. 150 years ago the Ardagh Chalice was discovered. *The Limerick Chronicle*, said to be the oldest newspaper in continuous production in Ireland, is 250 years old. The cast-iron vehicular river crossing, the oldest such structure on the island, at Barrington's Bridge, which was fabricated in Limerick, marks its bi-centenary, while St. Mary's Church of Ireland Cathedral is celebrating the 850<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its foundation.

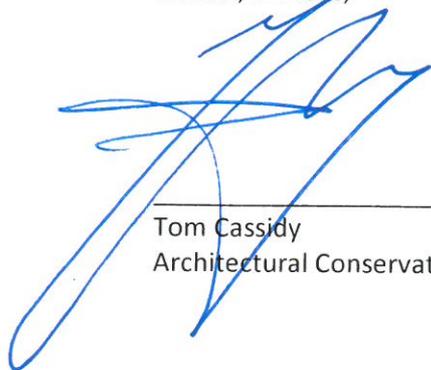
While objects and buildings are tangible representations of our past, other elements are intangible in nature and may consist of a traditional air or an anecdote about a long-dead figure, to the layout of the Georgian Core's grid which some see as the inspiration for the town plan for Melbourne, which was founded by a Limerickman. Such elusive or ethereal relics of our past also deserve to be recorded and availed of as part of our tourism offer.

The creation of an Inventory as envisaged would require a commitment of resources but would also be an opportunity to partner with national agencies and local custodians of our cultural assets. Many inventories, such as the Record of Monuments and Places and the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, as well as unpublished reports, such as that on Areas of Scientific Interest, could be availed of to commence the work.

Taking stock of historically important holdings in the possession of private citizens may be seen by third parties as intrusive, but experience has shown that many owners are more than willing to participate in this process provided that discretion is assured and that their trust is respected. This is illustrated by the ready response from individuals to loan paintings, statues, and other *objets d'art*, to temporary exhibitions, be they in our own facilities or in other institutions, such as the Hunt Museum. Sometimes a gesture, such as offering assistance in conserving and restoring a treasured item, even something as simple as a letter, is gratefully received and sparks deep confidence between the Council on the one part and the owner on the other.

Inventorising is a single step. Thereafter resources, sourced from the Exchequer, state agencies, as well as the Council's own revenues, would need to be put in place- having regard to the economic climate prevailing from year to year.

Is mise, le meas,



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Tom Cassidy  
Architectural Conservation Officer