

# Management of Monuments

## By Community Groups



**About the case study:** The GeoparkLIFE programme collaborated with the Kilinaboy Historical and Heritage Group (KHHG) to prevent the continued decay of a prominent historical landmark, An Cabhail Mhór, an early 17th Century fortified house which locals had seen deteriorate over the years and which they were keen to conserve for future generations. The overall aim of the GeoparkLIFE project was to develop a transferrable model of integrated and adaptive site management by community groups. A ‘learning by doing’ approach was undertaken and the training of a local community group to actively participate in the conservation of a heritage site was a key part of this. The An Cabhail Mór project was a direct parallel for the Heritage Council’s ‘Adopt a Monument’ Scheme. The experiences of both projects complimented and informed each other, and helped to achieve the following checklist for community groups to help them actively participate in the conservation of monuments.

### A checklist based on the Cabhail Mhór project, Kilinaboy, County Clare

**Please note that many old monuments may have Health & Safety risks so please take all due diligence before entering any monument.**

**Assess** – This is usually the easiest part of the whole process; identifying the problems that you want to address. This involves;

- a) Researching the history of the site (including oral tradition),
- b) Establishing the significance of the site to the local community,
- c) Getting appropriate landowner permission and
- d) Taking photographs of the problems that need to be addressed.

In other words, answering the question ‘why does the monument need community management?’

**Contact:** Local historians, archaeologists or other relevant local specialists or enthusiasts.

**Cost implications:** Low

**Consult** – Once all the information has been gathered and a decision has been made to continue it is critical that advice is sought from the relevant authorities.

You will need to check what type of legal protection the monument has;

- a) **Recorded Monument** under National Monuments Act 1930 -2004 responsibility of National Monuments Service or
- b) **Protected Structure** under Planning and Development Act 2000 responsibility of County Council or both.
- c) You will also need to have the site assessed for **Health and Safety** issues by a specialist.

**Please note:** that the preparation of a **Project Supervisor Design Process** is a condition for any public funded building conservation project taking more than 300 hours/50 days to complete and may place **insurance liabilities** on the landowner of the monument.

The site may also be in an area that is protected for **wildlife** and may require assessment by a specialist.

**Contact:** National Monuments Service.  
www.archaeology.ie or 01 8882169 or an Archaeologist, Conservation Officer or Heritage Officer in your local County Council. County Community Archaeologists are also available through the Heritage Council  
www.heritagecouncil.ie or 056 7770777  
Specialist conservation professionals based on advice from the above.

National Parks and Wildlife Service,  
www.npws.ie Specialist wildlife consultant.

**Cost implications:** Specialist Health & Safety Conservation engineers assessment.  
Specialist wildlife consultant

**Record** – It will be necessary to make a record of the monument before any work starts. This will require specialist expertise and may include drawing measured plans and elevations etc. The drawings will be used to highlight the problem areas and show where the conservation works are needed.

**Contact:** Qualified Archaeological survey technician

**Cost implications:** Archaeological recording Survey

**Plan** – You will need to draw up a plan for you project and appoint a suitable project manager. You will need a specialist to advise you on the details of the conservation works required. Your plan should be based on the principal of doing the minimum amount of conservation required. Depending on the funds and resources available as well as the needs of the monument you may need to

break the project down in several manageable phases.

**Contact:** Qualified conservation engineer

**Cost implications:** Conservation engineer

**Notify** – Once the plan has been developed, costed and agreed between the conservation specialist and the community group it will have to be submitted to either the National Monuments Service or your local County Council. Notification to the National Monuments Service may take up to two months and an excavation licence may be required, which if needed may take three weeks. Allow this time in your plan.

**Contact:** National Monuments Service, County Council.

**Cost implications:** Low

**Conserve** – Once all relevant permissions and funds are in place the works phase can begin. All conservation works will need to be supervised by a suitably qualified specialist and carried out by suitably trained people, if these are not volunteers there will be a cost, this will have been addressed in your submitted plan. You will need to let the relevant authorities know when you are starting the project so they can visit and you should also keep a good record (photographic and written) of the works as they are carried out.

**Contact:** National Monuments service, County Council, works supervisor and trained workers.

**Cost implication:** Works Supervisor, Trained Workers

**Monitor** – It is important to monitor the site after the conservation work has been completed to evaluate the effectiveness of the works carried out and to be alerted as early as possible to any problems that might arise in the future.

**Contact:** Local community volunteers

**Cost implications:** Low

## Useful documents to read before you start:

- *Framework and Principals for the Protection of the archaeological Heritage*. Published by the Government of Ireland 1999. Available online at [www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie) under publications section.
- *Adopt a Monument: Guidance for Community Archaeology Projects*. 2017. Published by the Heritage Council, available online at...
- *Ruins: The Conservation and Repair of Masonry Ruins*. Available online at http...
- *Heritage Guidelines*. In the LEADER Operating Rules 2014 – 2020. Available online at http....
- *GeoparkLIFE website*. [www.burrengeopark.ie/GeoparkLIFE](http://www.burrengeopark.ie/GeoparkLIFE)