

Conserving Ireland's Architectural Heritage

New Life for Historic Buildings and Places through a Shared Culture of Adaptation & Reuse

Abstracts and Biographies



Palazzo Butera, Palermo, Sicily
Images courtesy of Marco Cassina

Value for Many

Governing authority in Ireland's parliamentary, representative democratic republic is split between the Legislature, the Executive, and the Judiciary. Constitutionally, the Executive is answerable to the Lower House or, Dáil Éireann, or in English, The Assembly of Ireland. The priorities of the Executive are set by the citizens of Ireland. Until architecture is considered a matter of general public priority, conditions for change will be limited.

Palazzo Butera, a project for Palermo and Europe

Today Palazzo Butera, an eighteenth century palace facing the sea in Palermo, is in the midst of an ongoing restoration project. Bought by Francesca Frua De Angeli and Massimo Valsecchi in 2015, with the purpose to transform the Palace from a residential building into a centre for culture and research, the palace welcomes visitors daily. Located in the old Kalsa district of Palermo, the building's original layout dates back to the end of the seventeenth century, but its architectural configuration dates to the middle of the eighteenth century. Ultimately, the current layout of Palazzo Butera is born from constantly and patiently observing the palace and its original spatial and distributive character. And it is also born from a desire to approach original materials with sensitivity, avoiding disproportionate or incongruous additions, unauthentic restorations, or general fakery.

No 30 Parnell Square, was meticulously restored by DMVF Architects for the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO). An inappropriate extension to the rear was demolished and sensitively reimagined and connected to this important 1760s house. The brief required the retention of the existing office floor area while carefully integrating modern services and ancillary spaces. A glazed link bridges old and new, allowing the historic rear facade to remain legible and clearly articulating the dialogue between architectural eras.

The Old Belfast Bank, Rathmines, Dublin 6, involved the reimagining of the former bank, a protected structure shaped by successive uses as a bank, residence, shop and, more recently, offices. Acquired by our clients with a vision for renewal, the building was carefully adapted into a mixed-use development. The ground floor was transformed into a restaurant, while the upper levels were reconfigured to accommodate three distinctive two-bedroom apartments. Each residence is defined by generous proportions and access to its own private roof garden.

Reimagining the former Kelly’s Hotel and Wash House (THRIVE Project)

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council has been awarded THRIVE funding to transform No. 9 George’s Place, originally constructed as Kelly’s Hotel in 1831, and the former Wash House on Kelly’s Avenue, built in 1915, into a Centre for Creative Lifelong Learning. The proposed regeneration designed by dlr Architects to Part 8 stage to safeguard the unique architectural character, will create an inclusive, contemporary learning environment supported by a new extension that enhances universal accessibility, along with a biodiverse courtyard that will form a welcoming and vibrant shared outdoor space between the buildings. The project delivers a design-focused, sustainable adaptive-reuse of these vacant protected structures that will significantly enhance the public realm, improve accessibility and increase energy efficiency, all while preserving and celebrating the cultural and architectural heritage of this important historic site. This project is co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Union through the ERDF Southern, Eastern & Midland Regional Programme 2021-2027.



The New European Bauhaus (NEB)

The NEB empowers people, communities and businesses to shape a positive future that brings together sustainability, inclusion and beauty. It aims to turn the clean transition into a tangible, human-centred transformation of neighbourhoods and industries. This is achieved by mobilising an active community, integrating NEB values and principles into EU policies and programmes, and supporting innovative initiatives and projects. Building on the achievements of its first five years, the New European Bauhaus now seeks to further expand its support for businesses, innovators and communities, helping to drive a more sustainable, inclusive and high-quality transformation of Europe's living environments.

The phrase "**the greenest building is the one that is already built**," coined by architect [Carl Elefante](#), emphasises that reusing existing structures is more sustainable than constructing new ones - something that conservation, architectural and built environment professionals have long understood. Adaptive reuse schemes are transforming former commercial, industrial, and historic buildings into new residential, cultural, and educational spaces to combat dereliction and meet sustainability targets. These schemes are transforming, enriching and enlivening the cities in which we live, work and play. This presentation will cover a number of recent adaptive reuse schemes across the city where the consideration of the values and significance of the existing building stock in the first instance has informed sensitive, viable and sustainable new uses, to the benefit of the streetscape and the city. The presentation will include examples of adaptive reuse projects by McCullough Mulvin Architects (Fenian Street), Fitzgerald Kavanagh Architects (The Lower House, Grangegorman), Lawrence and Long Architects (49-51 Amiens Street), Shaffrey Associates (Clarendon Street and Henrietta Street).

RIAI as a key stakeholder of the National Policy on Architecture 'Places for People'

support adaptive re-use and promoting best practice in the regeneration of older buildings and places in our cities, towns and villages, to include such initiatives as RIAI Conservation Accreditation; and the promotion of good practice through RIAI awards and publications, in particular *'Old House, New Home'* and *'Old Town, New Place'*.

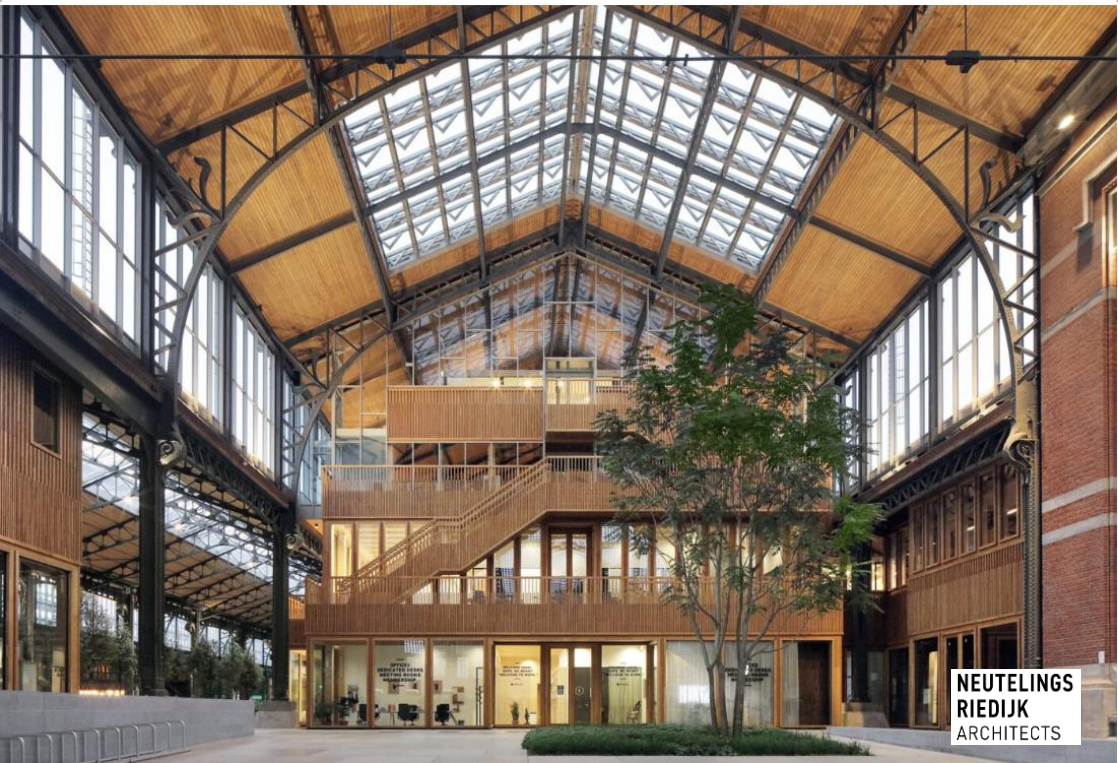
Adapted, an unusually narrow, 19th century, terraced building to its new use as a student residence for musicians, all studying at the Royal Irish Academy of Music in Dublin. Additions to the existing building included a new penthouse extension at roof level, together with a 3-storey cantilevered glass box to the rear. Furthermore, a previously uninhabitable basement with historic brick vaults was uncovered, conserved and rehabilitated as a new social space for the students.

'Continuity through transformation - *Beauty and new life in existing cities*'.

The climate crisis demands new approaches to buildings and cities.

Repurposing vacant or derelict buildings offers viable strategies to meet changing environmental and societal needs. This lecture presents adaptive reuse as a means of connecting heritage, architecture and contemporary urban life. Through projects such as **Gare Maritime in Brussels**, **Cité des Imaginaires in Nantes** and the **Amsterdam Museum transformation**, the talk explores how historic and industrial structures can be reactivated for new civic and cultural uses, demonstrating how architectural continuity, sustainability and public life can emerge from a careful dialogue between the existing city and new architectural interventions.

Quality, Angela Rolfe, President, ICOMOS Ireland will address the following themes: European Quality Principles for EU-funded interventions with potential impact upon cultural heritage; the importance of engaging the community to value the significance of local architecture and to participate in the long-term stewardship and care for their environment; the conclusion of the ICOMOS report on the implementation of the EPBD, that the adaptation of cultural heritage is part of the solution; and planned preventative maintenance and the honourable tradition of make-do and mend.



**NEUTELINGS
RIEDIJK
ARCHITECTS**

Adaptive reuse of Kylemore Abbey and Strokestown Park House

Kylemore Abbey, protected structure of International importance and a national monument under the National Monuments Service (GA023-026).

The visitor experience and flow were reimagined to bring visitors in through a disused rear yard, pantry, and kitchen when the initial orientation and takes place, thus negating the need to interfere with the authentic fabric in the remainder of the abbey. Visitors now exit through the front door to the magnificent view of the Lough Pollacappul and the Twelve Bens (pins).

Strokestown Park House, protected Structure of National importance and a national monument under the National Monuments Service (RO023-172002).

The courtyard range was adapted to house a new National Famine Museum and visitor experience that emotively and sensitively tells the story of the Great Famine at Strokestown Park and beyond. A new entry was formed in the courtyard enclosure to bring clarity and legibility to this new interpretation project.

The Magazine Fort, Phoenix Park is one of Ireland's most significant military sites.

The restoration of the Fort enhances the Phoenix Parks cultural landscape positioned within the military landscape of the Liffey Valley in close proximity to the Irish National War Memorial Gardens and the Royal Hospital Kilmainham to the south and Arbour Hill and Grangegorman Military Cemeteries to the east and north. This project stabilised and restored the main Fort (built 1730s), addressing structural issues with the defensive rampart walls and restoring key structures including the Magazine gunpowder store and blast wall. The Duke of Dorset Gate, the original entrance, was reconstructed and was pivotal in restoring the site's architectural integrity and historical significance. These works were an opportunity to develop craft skills in the areas of masonry repairs and reconstruction, as well as lime rendering, natural slate roofing and leadwork.

Irish Landmark Trust is an all-island educational charity that saves vulnerable historic buildings and gives them sustainable new life through adaptive reuse. We conserve at-risk structures—often those with no viable conventional function—using best-practice conservation architecture and partnership models. By repurposing them as self-funding heritage-based holiday accommodation, rental income supports their long-term care. In doing so, we demonstrate how sensitive restoration and the integration of modern, energy-efficient systems can secure a regenerative future for Ireland's built heritage.

Dublin Civic Trust undertook the Europa Nostra Award-winning conservation of [18 Ormond Quay Upper](#) as a model revival of a typical 1840s merchant residence over shop in the heart of Dublin city. The project showcased the application of traditional skills and materials, plus the inherent beauty and adaptability of Ireland's urban buildings for modern life.

The Trust is now embarking on the restoration of [68 Arran Street East](#), a c.1760s building appended to the rear of [18 Ormond Quay Upper](#), as a dynamic example of adaptive reuse as the Trust's working premises. This project aims to retain historic fabric from three centuries of evolution as a living storyboard of an historic urban building while disseminating the process for public education.

Crawford Art Gallery, Cork: the City as Participant. Grafton Architects were appointed in 2021 by the Crawford Art Gallery and the OPW to realise an ambitious project to transform its spaces, offering new possibilities to engage with the city and visitors. The only National cultural Institution located outside of Dublin, and a key anchor in the cultural life of the city, this much-loved historic institution, will be reimagined within its existing tight urban site. Key conservation and internal alteration works to the existing historic fabric will run in parallel with the addition of 1000 m2 of additional accommodation, contained in a compact addition spread over 8 levels, leading to a new gallery overlooking the city. As a result, further space in the historic fabric will be released as gallery space respecting the atmosphere, character, and intimate scale of the complex of buildings that describe the Crawford. Grafton architects are working closely with Shaffrey Associates Conservation Architects as a key part of the team on this ambitious project.

Baukultur: an integrated approach to European heritage assets.

Reviving existing building stock, especially within historic areas experiencing market stigma or physical decline, is a socio-economic challenge for which creative visions need to be backed up with cunning and gumption. Overcoming silo-mindsets unlocks, reinvests and sustains benefits.

The principle underpins the New European Bauhaus, Culture Compass for Europe and Davos Baukultur Alliance; it is a mainstay of Europa Nostra. Adaptive reuse of Ireland's heritage means adapting mindsets, which can benefit by pinching precedents from across Europe.

West Gate House

This Thrive funded project presents an opportunity to re-purpose West Gate House - a palimpsest of historic fabric and function, comprising medieval Town Wall, remnants of the terraced garden of 18th century Barlow House, 19th century West Gate House and rear outbuildings, early 20th century small scale timber merchants warehouse and yard, and latterly, Guest House and youth development centre. Currently in a precarious condition, the project – with proposed cultural uses, layouts and design solutions developed through an intense listening dialogue amongst many stakeholders and a careful and creative consideration of the rich architectural and urban heritage of Drogheda – can be a beacon within an area challenged by persistent vacancy. Critically, it can integrate with other planned projects of scale within the immediate area to have genuinely transformative impact, not only for the physical fabric of Drogheda, but also its sense of identity and civic pride.

Care is Harder Than Love – it is time to care for buildings, whether we like them or not – a view from the Irish Architecture Foundation.



Unlocking our Maritime Heritage at Dublin

Dublin Ports Masterplan 2040 sets out a bold and ambitious view of where the Port will be in 2040, by then we will have transformed Dublin Port into a highly land efficient port, an attractive destination in its own right and permeable to the people of Dublin to enjoy and experience the port's heritage in all its diversity from the built heritage, natural environment, archives, and the arts. Central to the vision is the distributed museum network which is a series of historical buildings that the Port has preserved and is integral to the concept of Port City Integration as outlined in the Ports Conservation Strategy. To connect the Distributed Museum Network Dublin Port is currently building 16km of greenways so that visitor's can move between all the buildings.

The Deanery Mews.

This is the story of how a small neglected service building came to hold a key role at the core of the dynamic and hard-working, cathedral community. The 2-storey Deanery Mews, built in the nineteenth century on the site of the stable yard of the ancient deanery, formerly accommodated a carriage, horses and the groom of the Dean of Saint Patrick's Cathedral. It now provides state of the art accommodation for music education and performance, whilst also facilitating large community gatherings for social, educational and outreach purposes.

It is a project of three parts - the careful upgrade and repurposing of the traditional mews itself including a contemporary extension; the reconfiguration of the stable yard as an accessible amenity space including the conservation of its historic cobbles; the redesign of the Dean's garden to create a new accessible garden promenade connecting the Deanery and its mews with the South Close of the National Cathedral.

The National Concert Hall – Reimagined. The redevelopment of the National Concert Hall seeks to find the appropriate balance between the conservation, restoration and enhancement of the existing Earlsfort Terrace Complex while ensuring that the National Concert Hall is a premiere venue for music both nationally and internationally. The evolution and history of the Earlsfort Terrace Complex is extensive, it is a product of the political and economic circumstances of its time. The legacy of these buildings that remain, somewhat at odds with one another, include part of the original Exhibition Hall building of 1865 subsequently enveloped by the R. M. Butler University building in the early part of the 20th Century. The redevelopment of the National Concert Hall will double its current usable area from over 9,000Sqm closer to 21,000Sqm, predominantly through re-use and adaption of existing vacant spaces.

Revealing the Local Character of Irish Towns: A Heritage-Led Approach to Sustainable Public Realm

Historic town centres in Ireland are protected through Architectural Conservation Areas, yet the historic public realm between buildings remains largely shaped by engineering-led practices and car dominance. This disconnect raises a critical question: how can sustainability and adaptive reuse be meaningfully applied to the historic urban spaces that shape the local character of Irish towns? This contribution reflects on the need for a cultural shift towards a multidisciplinary, heritage-led design approach within local authorities. Working across architecture, urban design and roads, each intervention—down to a road maintenance detail—can become an opportunity to reveal and enhance the local character of a streetscape, through placemaking.

Using tools such as historic mapping, DMURS and 3D masterplanning, combined with community storytelling, we can align heritage, movement and climate resilience. This supports the adaptive reuse of the public realm as a key component of sustainable development. Adaptive reuse must extend beyond buildings to the public realm—where the authenticity and everyday life of our towns are most visibly shaped, allowing them to evolve while remaining true to their character.

Varvsstaden (Shipyards town)

For over a decade, Varvsstaden has been under reconstruction. A former shipyard (Kockums) has been transformed and have become an integrated part of the city, with new functions in the old buildings. Cultural heritage has played an important role, and has been a guiding star, in transforming the area. Many preserved artifacts bear witness to the history of the place while creating qualities that could not be found anywhere else.

Biographies



Conor Sreenan, State Architect and Principal Architect at the Office of Public Works. **Conor** is responsible for leading Architectural Services within the Office of Public Works by setting standards that ensure high-quality and enduring outcomes that generate value for many. Conor is a member of the Irish Government Construction Contracts Committee, a member of several Government Capital Oversight Boards and is a Board member of the Irish Architectural Archive.

Image by Lori Keeve



Gráinne Shaffrey. Architect (FRIAI), urban designer (M.A. Urban Design and Regeneration) and RIAI Grade 1 conservation architect. Grainne is a member of the RIAI Urban Design Committee and ICOMOS International. Grainne is the principal architect and Director of Shaffrey Architects, Silver Medal winner for Conservation 2024. Projects include the conservation and adaptation of: King House, Boyle & St. Mary's Church, Dublin, as well as a number of projects for the Irish Landmark Trust including the mews building of number 63 Merrion Square, the HQ of the RSAI, Salterbridge Gate Lodge, Co. Waterford & the Wicklow Lighthouse. Grainne continues to practice on towns and buildings and remains open to both new and old ideas, angles, and questions about the environment we shape.



Graham Bell is a Board Member of Europa Nostra; he leads Mission visits for the 7 Most Endangered programme with the European Investment Bank Institute and represents Europa Nostra on the Steering Committee of the Davos Baukultur Alliance, hosted by the World Economic Forum. He worked as an architect on transformational socio-economic regeneration, leading to governance and project management with cultural heritage NGOs across Europe, and consultancy with the Council of Europe. He was UK National Co-ordinator for 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage, liaising with the European Commission.



Fearghas Ó Béara, Head of the European Parliament Liaison Office in Ireland, has worked 28 years in a variety of roles at the European Parliament. Prior to his appointment to Ireland, he spent 10 years at the EP Research Service (EPRS) in Brussels, most recently as Head of Unit for policy research on education and culture. Earlier roles include managing the European Parliament Library, administering the Institution's dialogue with churches, religious, and humanist organisations, and advising two European Parliament Presidents. He holds a Doctorate in public ethics from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, a Master's in Economics from University College Dublin, and a Bachelor's in Education from Trinity College Dublin.

[LinkedIn profile](#) (with detailed CV and links to publications)



Fionnuala Sweeney is Head of Film and Architecture at the Arts Council. She is responsible for the Arts Council's policy formulation and implementation, and grant and client relationship management, in film and architecture. She led the development of the Arts Council's architecture policy, *Championing Architecture*, and works to support and advance architecture culture in Ireland.



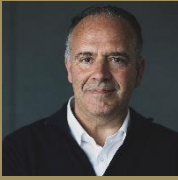
Morris Conway, MRIAI, Senior Architect, Economic Development, Waterford City & County Council. A graduate of SETU and UCD, Schools of Architecture, he has previously worked in the roles of town engineer & town architect. Morris served as project architect for Waterford's Viking Triangle for a decade, and he is now leading the Council's projects team in the areas of urban and rural regeneration. He is currently collaborating on several town and village regeneration and development strategies involving historic building conservation, placemaking and public realm improvements.



Dr. Claudio Gulli, studied art history at the University of Siena and the Scuola Normale in Pisa. Between 2009 and 2011, he worked at the Département des Peintures at the Louvre, working on Leonardo da Vinci for two exhibitions: St John the Baptist (Milan, 2009) and St Anne (Louvre, 2011). Since 2017, he is director of Palazzo Butera, the newly opened centre for ancient and contemporary art opened in Palermo by collectors Francesca and Massimo Valsecchi.



Andrée Dargan is the County Architect at Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council where she is a member of the Council's Leadership Team and heads up the Architects' Department which provides a broad range of building related services in the areas of Housing, Civic Buildings, Public Realm, Urban Design, Energy, Conservation and Dangerous Buildings. dlr Architects are a recognised leader in sustainable building practices and their urban design work has transformed towns and villages into climate-resilient sustainable neighbourhoods. Andrée is the nominated Energy Performance Officer for DLR as defined under Public Sector - Energy Efficiency Strategy. She is a fellow of the RIAI, is currently the Chair of the City and County Architects' Association, and sits on the RIAI Architecture and Public Affairs Committee. She has for many years promoted the benefits of having architects within local authorities and has been an advocate for low energy building design.



Michiel Riedijk, received his Master of Architecture from **Delft University of Technology** in 1989.

He co-founded the Rotterdam-based office **Neutelings Riedijk Architects** together with Willem Jan Neutelings. In 2007 he was appointed **Professor of Public Building at Delft University of Technology**, combining academic research with architectural practice.

The office is internationally recognised for cultural and civic projects such as the **MAS Museum in Antwerp** and the **Naturalis Biodiversity Center in Leiden**, and in 2017 Riedijk was elected **Honorary Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects (Hon. FRIBA)**.



Shane Nolan, is Director of Nolans Group Conservation & Restoration, a well-respected specialist conservation firm working in the Irish conservation field for over 25 years. The firm employs a team of highly skilled employees, offering a combination of traditional skills and innovative repair techniques to cater for the conservation and sustainability demands presented by historic buildings. Nolans Group have worked on some of Ireland's largest and most significant conservation projects, ranging from McKee Barracks for the Department of Defence to one of the largest Georgian mansions in Dublin at Number 3 Henrietta Street and many Georgian buildings in the various different squares in Dublin. Shane Nolan maintains a keen interest in the use, development and promotion of building limes, sensitive masonry repair and cleaning techniques, and serves on the board of the Building Limes Forum Ireland.



Niamh Kiernan, is the Senior Executive Architectural Conservation Officer responsible for managing the development management team in the conservation section in DCC. Her role is to provide advice on the care of historic structures in the city to members of the public, architectural professionals and owners and across all departments in the council, promoting good conservation practice in how we care for our historic building stock and keep it in sustainable long-term use. Niamh is also an assistant lecturer in Spatial Planning undergraduate and postgraduate modules in TU Dublin. Prior to joining DCC, Niamh worked in various architectural conservation practices in Ireland and the UK and worked in the Estates Team at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Biographies



Lisa McVeigh and Colm Doyle are Directors at DMVF Architects. Central to DMVF's ethos is the belief that existing buildings hold untapped cultural, material, and environmental value. The studio is particularly known for the thoughtful conservation and adaptive reuse of historic structures. Their work demonstrates how contemporary architecture can respectfully integrate and extend the life of the past.



Ciaran O'Brien is a director and founding member of OBFA Architects. He studied at University College Dublin, and has been in practice for 26 years, working in both the public and private sectors. Ciaran has a particular interest and expertise in supported housing and has extensive experience in working with Central Government Departments, Local Authorities and Approved Housing Bodies in the delivery of complex housing projects nationally. He maintains a strong interest and engagement in projects that interact with historic buildings, urban realm regeneration, and the opportunities in bringing vacant sites and buildings back into use.



Nicola Matthews is a Senior Architect and has a diverse and busy role, including the development of a range of progressive national policies and actions for cultural heritage and the broader built and natural environment. Nicola participates in the EU OMC working group, which wrote the first EU architectural policy, 'Towards a shared culture of Architecture'. Nicola is the National Contact Point for the New European Bauhaus (NEB), and has an advisory role on cultural heritage regeneration and on integrating the NEB approach into the ERDF THRIVE Funding programme,. This role provides the opportunity to transfer EU architectural policy, knowledge, practice, and research, along with the New European Bauhaus values and principles of beauty, sustainability, and inclusiveness, into Irish Towns to support their revitalisation. Nicola has been a judge for the Europa Nostra Awards, currently is the vice chair of the RIAI Urban Design Committee and an active member of ICOMOS IRL and the Irish Georgian Society.

Biographies



Michael O'Boyle is a RIAI Grade 1 Conservation Architect and a director of Michael O'Boyle Architecture + Conservation. He holds a Masters in Urban and Building Conservation (MUBC) from UCD and has worked on a wide range conservation projects and new buildings in historic settings across Ireland. Michael is chair of the RIAI Historic Buildings Committee and is a current member of RIAI Council. He is actively involved in the conservation accreditation system within the RIAI. He is chairman of Irish Landmark Trust and is a trustee of the Buildings of Ireland Charitable Trust.



Joe Lawrence qualified from the School of Architecture in UCD in 1994 and is a registered Architect. He is a Fellow of the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland and is an international chartered member of the Royal Institute of British Architects. He is RIAI accredited Grade 1 Conservation Architect and his work has received a number of architectural awards, particularly for projects working with historic buildings, often located in sensitive contexts.



Peter Power, has been the Head of the European Commission Representation in Ireland since 16 February 2025. From 2022 to early 2024 he was a Senior Adviser to the Director-General of the Directorate-General for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations. Previously, he held the roles of Head of Cabinet of Commissioner Phil Hogan and Commissioner Mairead McGuinness. Earlier in his career, Mr Power served as Head of Press at the European Commission Representation in Dublin and held several roles within the Commission's Cabinets and Directorates-General.



Jacqueline Hall, Chair Irish Georgian Society. Jacqueline Hall is the Principal of Partners in Communication, a consultancy specialising in Government Affairs and Stakeholder Engagement. She is Chair of the Irish Georgian Foundation and a lay Member of the Board of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin. She has previously served as a member of the Board of Governors and Guardians of the National Gallery of Ireland and as President of the Public Relations Institute of Ireland. She has served on the board of Irish Water and Ervia and the Council of Dublin Chamber of Commerce. She has a BA (Hons) in History & History of Art, (UCD), a Graduateship in Marketing Management (TUD), a Graduate Diploma in Corporate Governance (UCD), an Advanced Diploma in Data Protection Law/GDPR (Honorable Society of King's Inns), and a Graduate Diploma in Conflict & Dispute Resolution (TCD)

Biographies



Sarah Woods is a registered architect and a member of the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland (RIAI), with over 20 years of experience of designing and delivering public works. An Assistant Principal Architect in the Office of Public Works, currently leading on the redevelopment of the Concert Hall and the new Dublin Family Courts at Hammond Lane..



Gerard Carty. Grafton Architects was established in 1978 by Founding Directors Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara, a Dublin based practice with a strong national and international profile, whose work has been recognised, exhibited and published widely. Director Gerard Carty, has been with Grafton Architects for over 30 years, contributing to the ideas, ethos and management of the practice. He qualified in 1987 with a diploma from DIT Dublin, and a degree from University of Dublin, Trinity College. Involved in architectural education since 1993, as both teacher and invited critic, to schools in Ireland, and abroad, he is currently an Associate Professor at SAUL, University of Limerick, in the mid-west of Ireland.



Valerie Mulvin, is a co-founder of McCullough Mulvin Architects, a Dublin practice focusing on the design of sustainable cultural, educational and civic buildings, with an interest in innovative contemporary architecture, place, and history. McCullough Mulvin's award-winning buildings nationally and internationally include; Trinity Long Room Hub, Dublin Dental School & Hospital, Waterford Fire Station, Butler Gallery, Medieval Mile Museum, Printing House Square Student Housing, and the Learning Laboratory in Thapar University, India. Her work is extended by publications, teaching and research, and has been exhibited internationally. Valerie's book *Approximate Formality – Morphology of Irish Towns* discusses the origin, originality and potential of towns and town plans in Ireland, and this research formed part of a national touring exhibition *The Reason of Towns*, a collaboration with the Irish Architecture Foundation. Valerie is a member of Aosdána.

Biographies



Emmett Scanlon, is an architect and the Director of the Irish Architecture Foundation (IAF). IAF works island-wide, bringing audiences together to experience, explore and discuss how architecture shapes our lives. Through festivals, exhibitions, placemaking and learning initiatives, IAF expands knowledge and understanding, sparks new ideas and advances new thinking about the role of architecture and the built environment in our shared future.



Niamh Lunny, is CEO of Irish Landmark Trust, an all-island educational heritage charity dedicated to bringing historic buildings back to life. A creative leader with a background in design and production, she previously served as Creative Producer of Fáilte Ireland's inaugural Púca Festival and has worked extensively with many of Ireland's leading theatre companies. Niamh is passionate about people, culture, design and collaboration, she was awarded the prestigious Jerome Hynes Clore Fellowship by the Arts Council of Ireland in 2018. She is a graduate of Limerick College of Art and Design.



Giulia Vallone, MRAI | AoU – Urban Designer, is a Senior Architect with Cork County Council, where she leads the County Placemaking Unit within the Economic Development and Strategic Planning Directorate. Giulia's work focuses on heritage-led regeneration, advancing town centre public realm and placemaking through participatory design, innovative 3D masterplanning and nature-based solutions. She advocates for design excellence and for the role of the civic architect and urban designer in shaping people–place–planet-led sustainable development supporting socio-economic regeneration. Her work reveals and enhances the local character of Irish towns through the sensitive integration of contemporary interventions, positioning urban design as a framework to align heritage, infrastructure, transport and climate resilience. Her projects have received several design awards.

Giulia serves on the RIAI Council and Urban Design Committee and is a member of the Academy of Urbanism, and the Irish Cities 2070 (IC2070) group. She champions the New European Bauhaus approach and has contributed to European initiatives including the THRIVE project.

Biographies



Charlotte Sheridan, is a registered architect (FRIAI) and town planner (MIPI). She has over 25 years' professional experience as a Director of Sheridan Woods Architects & Urban Planners specialising in urban regeneration, heritage, housing, sustainable communities, and collaborative planning in cities, towns and villages in Ireland. Charlotte is a former President of the RIAI and a board member of the National Asset Management Agency (NAMA) and the Irish Georgian Foundation. In 2026 she was appointed the Chair of the Irish Georgian Society's Architectural Conservation & Planning Committee.



Donough Cahill, Executive Director, MSc. Executive Leadership, Postgrad. Dip. Building Conservation, Postgrad. Dip. Heritage Management. Oversees the strategic and day-to-day operations of the Irish Georgian Society and of its Dublin based office through working with the Irish Georgian Foundation's Committee of Management, its standing committees and working groups, with the Chicago based office of the Society's US charitable body IGS Inc., and with trustees of the UK based Irish Georgian Society London. Board member of the Hunt Museum.



Michael Horan is an Architect and the principle of Axo Architects, an award-winning practice specialising in museums and visitor attractions often with heritage and adaptive challenges and opportunities. The practice won the RIAI Irish Architecture public choice award in 2025 and represented Ireland in the EU Prize for Contemporary Architecture for 2026 for their new Benedictine Monastery at Kylemore Abbey.



Fionnuala Hayes, Director of Howley Hayes Cooney Architecture, Conservation Architect Grade 1. A graduate of UCD, the first decade of practice was spent with HTA in London working in the area of social housing and design for special needs, community planning and regeneration. In 2005 Fionnuala joined James Howley to establish Howley Hayes Architects, now Howley Hayes Cooney Architecture, taking responsibility for the social housing portfolio and completed several social housing developments and masterplans with an emphasis on sustainability and placemaking. As Ireland's commitment to its built heritage matured, and building on the practice's reputation in the field of conservation, her later projects have been exclusively in the area of conservation and re-purposing of historic buildings, some within highly sensitive archaeological environments, always with a focus on sustainability. The Deanery Mews project draws together the practice's expertise in design and conservation with its experience in understanding and responding to the needs of a particular community.



Oisín Creagh, Architect Grade 1

DESIGN FORUM Architects was established by Oisín Creagh in June 2010. For the previous 20 years, Oisín was an Architect and Director with MOLA, Murray O'Laoire Architects.

Oisín's was the Director of Conservation, and regional Director of the Cork office of Murray O'Laoire Architects since its opening in 2001, and worked before this, in the Dublin office for the previous ten years.

Oisín's projects during this period have been published and exhibited widely.



Audrey Farrell, is a Senior Conservation Architect (Grade 1) at the

Office of Public Works. She is responsible for the maintenance, restoration and adaptation works at across a range of heritage buildings and parks, including Dublin Castle, the Four Courts, the Magazine Fort in the Phoenix Park, Emo Court, and Kilmacurragh House at National Botanic Gardens. She studied architecture at Queens University, Belfast and 'Applied Building Repair and Conservation' at Trinity College Dublin.

Audrey recently led the OPW 'Improving the Energy Performance of Heritage Properties in State Care' Initiative to develop guidance with supporting case-studies and training.

Photo Credit: Fionn McCann



Graham Hickey, is CEO at Dublin Civic Trust, the built heritage

organisation that engenders public awareness about Dublin's built inheritance through education and active conservation projects. Graham is a broadcasting graduate of TU Dublin and a post-graduate of Applied Building Repair and Conservation from Trinity College Dublin, where his study focused on the history and reconstruction of the State Apartments at Dublin Castle in the 20th century. He is both author and contributing author to several architectural publications and compendiums. He is a regular media writer on architectural heritage and the development of Dublin city.

18 Ormond Quay, the home of the Dublin Civic Trust and a project guided by Graham, is the recipient of the prestigious Europa Nostra Award 2021, acknowledging the project as an exemplar of urban regeneration.



Angela Rolfe, Architect and Urban Designer, BSc. BArch, MSc Urban Design, FRIAI (retd), AoU. Angela served as an architect in the Office of Public Works between 1980 and 2017. Her major projects include the Restoration and Conference Centre, Upper Yard, Dublin Castle [1981-9], the Conversion of the College of Science to the Department of the Taoiseach [1990-1], the Restoration of the Birr Telescope [1994-6], the Restoration and Extension to the Clock Tower Building, Dublin Castle, for the Chester Beatty Library [1994-2000]. As Head of Property Maintenance Services, she was responsible for upgrading and maintenance of a broad range of state property, including Aras an Uachtaráin, National Concert Hall and the National Gallery. Angela is currently the President of ICOMOS Ireland and the National Scientific Committee for 20th Century Heritage, a member of RIAI Urban Design Committee, Save Kilmainham Mill Group, Kilmainham Inchicore Network, Inchicore Regeneration Consultative Forum and was a part-time lecturer at the Yeats Academy of Art, Design and Architecture, ATU Sligo until 2025.



Lar Joye, has served as Port Heritage Director at Dublin Port since 2017, where he oversees the 300-year-old Port Archive and leads the Port City Integration Team. Previously, Lar worked as a Film Archivist and as Curator of Irish Military History at the National Museum of Ireland, where he led a multidisciplinary team to create *Soldiers and Chiefs*, a landmark exhibition exploring Irish military history from 1550 to the present. During the Decade of Commemorations (2012-2022) he collaborated with ANU Productions on immersive, historically based theatre works including *Pals – The Irish at Gallipoli*, *Sunder*, *These Rooms*, and *The Book of Names*. Through a combination of archival innovation, creative partnerships, and civic engagement, Lar is helping to redefine how maritime heritage can be shared with contemporary audiences. In his spare time he is currently writing a book on the Irish War of Independence in County Tipperary, part of a series on Ireland's 32 counties.



Frank Cooney, Architect Grade 3
In 1995, Frank Cooney established Cooney Architects. Prior to establishing Cooney Architects in 1995, he worked with the Terry Farrell Partnership in London and with McCullough Mulvin Architects and Murray O'Laoire Architects in Dublin. At Murray O'Laoire Architects he was the Project Architect for the EU sponsored prototype energy efficient Green Building in Temple Bar, and he was a project architect for the RIAI Gold Medal winning Civic Park and Tourism Information Office at Arthur's Quay Park.



Olof Martinsson is the chief heritage officer in Malmö with responsibility for the city's cultural environments from both a conservation and a strategic perspective. He also leads the cultural administration's work in ensuring culture's place in urban planning with focus on the conditions for a culture-driven urban development . Olof has 20 years of experience working with cultural environments and urban development at a local, regional and national level.



Acknowledgements

This conference is presented by The European Parliament Liaison Office in Ireland, the European Commission Representation in Ireland, in partnership with the Irish Georgian Society and supported by the Office of Public Works and National Built Heritage Service

The event contributes to ongoing reflection and action under the National Policy on Architecture ‘Places for People’, aligned with the EU architectural policy - ‘*Towards a shared culture of architecture – investing in a high-quality living environment for everyone*’ and the values and the New European Bauhaus initiative.

The programming of the conference and workshop was made possible by the support of many contributors, with expert input at all stages—both in shaping the conference concept and bringing it to life.

We extend particular thanks to our colleagues who travelled to provide the European perspective, to colleagues from the Office of Public Works, National Built Heritage Service & RIAI.

We are also especially grateful to our host of expert speakers and chairs, who have been so generous with their time, and for sharing their knowledge and experience.

