

DOE LISTED BUILDING GRANT SCHEME

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK

March 2016

Historic Environment Division



Front cover: repair work to Holy Trinity Church, Cookstown.

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Introduction

The Public Accounts Committee’s report of September 2012 had the following recommendation among a number made about the work of the Historic Buildings Unit:

‘It is essential that grant schemes have clear objectives and that the outcomes of the expenditure can be properly evaluated. The Committee recommends that NIEA puts in place a formal performance measurement framework for the listed buildings grant scheme that will allow the results achieved from this element of its expenditure to be quantified and used to revise the scheme, as necessary.’

The Listed Building Grant Scheme works to conserve individual listed buildings through providing support for repairs and associated fees. The range and extent of this work is recorded in the Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report. The latest version published in March 2015 contains statistics until March 2014:

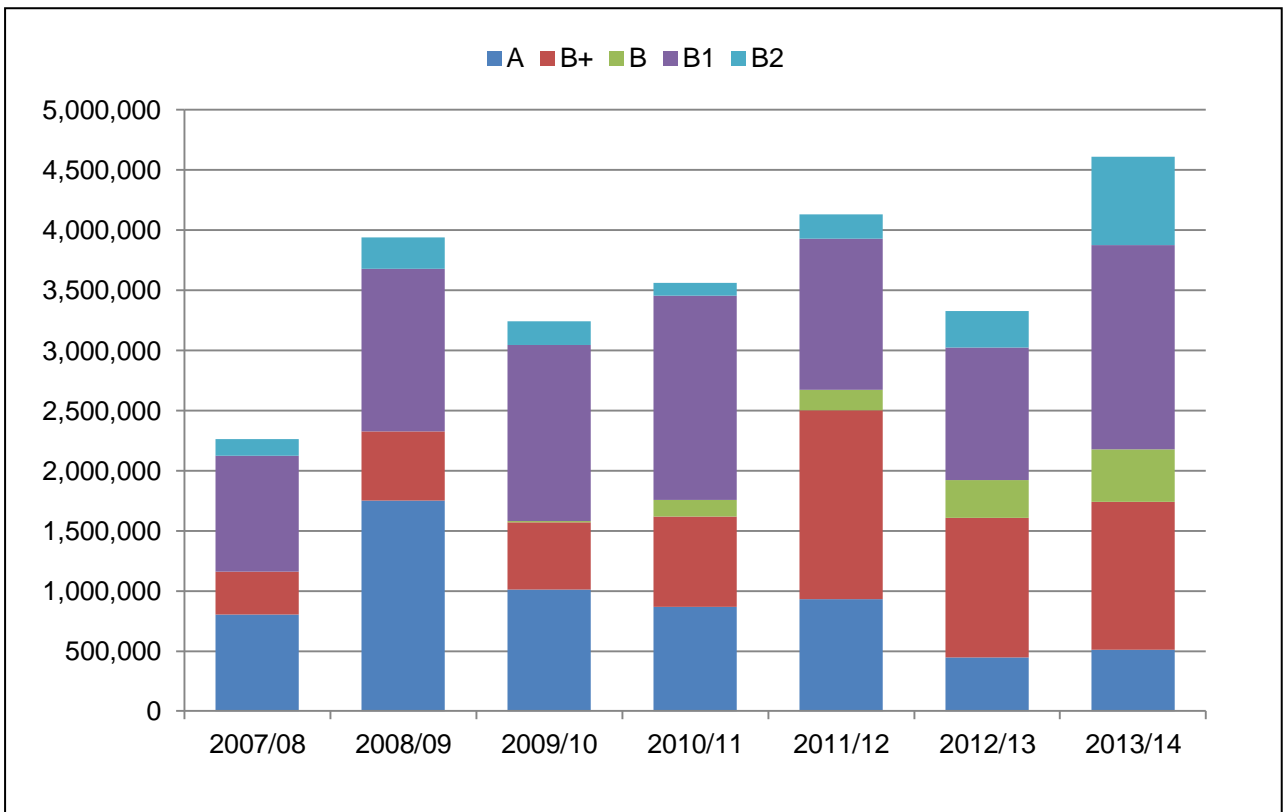


Table 7.4 Value of Grant paid and the number of buildings in receipt of grant in each listed building grade

Grade		2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
A	Value (£)	804,000	1,750,000	1,009,000	869,000	931,000	445,180	511,875
	Number	16	10	22	21	17	16	15
B+	Value (£)	358,000	575,000	560,000	749,000	1,574,000	1,163,826	1,229,348
	Number	14	22	24	22	27	33	31
B	Value (£)	0	0	12,000	140,000	170,000	314,335	434,995
	Number	0	0	3	13	7	11	12
B1	Value (£)	964,000	1,352,000	1,466,000	1,696,000	1,255,000	1,099,181	1,697,248
	Number	47	42	72	66	73	74	73
B2	Value (£)	136,000	261,000	196,000	109,000	201,000	307,061	736,105
	Number	2	15	18	13	17	25	35
Total	Value (£)	2,262,000	3,938,000	3,243,000	3,563,000	4,131,000	3,329,583	4,609,571
	Number	79	89	139	135	141	159	166

An increase in the number of buildings supported can be seen from 2009/10. This is likely to reflect the extension of eligibility and an increase in grant rates introduced in 2008. A further modest increase can be seen in 2012/13 with a further increase in 2013/14. This is likely to reflect an increase in grant rates introduced in November 2012.

DOE's published overall aim for the scheme is as follows:

“To bring listed buildings up to a reasonable / good state of repair (condition) and thereafter, maintain them in a good state of repair (condition) through preventative maintenance”.

The most recent approach has been to seek to maximise the impact of the grant paid by distributing it as widely as possible and particularly to private owners of listed buildings who would not normally have access to other sources of support such as lottery funding or investment in publicly owned buildings. This approach followed a period when assistance was only provided to the most important listed buildings and followed a realisation, based upon empirical evidence from the Department's Second Survey, that lower grade buildings, unsupported by grant aid between 1986 and 2008, were in much poorer condition than other listed buildings and appeared to be more likely to be removed from the list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest.

The challenge for a performance measurement framework is to consider what impact the approach currently being taken or changes introduced in recent years is having in regard to this overall aim and to set out a way by which future changes could be measured.

Performance Indicators.

1. Demand for the Listed Building Grant.

One indicator of the effectiveness of a grant scheme is demand. If the available budget is not being fully expended then this can be an indicator that there is not a need for the support being offered. This may be because: there is no need for support; owners are being put off by the bureaucracy of a grant scheme; the financial benefit is not sufficient to put up with the perceived complexity of applying; or a scheme is being targeted too narrowly. For listed building grant, targeted on repairs to buildings, there will also be a lead in period between the offering of grant and its full expenditure as building schemes are prone to delays and can take time to complete. This was the case between 2001 and 2003 after the scheme was stopped for a year in 2000. It took three years to regain full budget spend.

Over the last five years the grant scheme has been fully spent. The statistics available relative to the grant scheme therefore, demonstrate strong continuing demand.

2. Demand – Number of schemes supported.

In September 2008 the grant scheme was extended to lower grade listings for the first time since 1986. At the same time grant support was increased from 20% to 35% for repairs for most types of application. In subsequent years there was a dramatic increase in the number of schemes supported. This rose from an average of 87 in the three years before 2008 to 138 in the three years following. Number of schemes supported rose again in 2012/13 to 159 and in 2013/14 to 166 probably reflective of an increase in support from 35% to 45% in November 2012.

Not surprisingly, therefore, increasing the availability of grant has increased the take up. Perhaps more interestingly, however, is that while take up remained constant at higher grade A and B+ buildings (which were already supported at 33% before 2008) increasing the rate of support has also increased the take up from the B1 grade (which was supported at 20% before 2008). Increasing the rate to 45% in 2012 also appears to have resulted in an increase in work across all grades. This means that increasing the rate of support has had a catalytic effect i.e it has encouraged investment in buildings by making it more cost effective for owners to commission such work. This was the argument deployed in 2012 in support of a successful bid for extra investment to this scheme to the NI Executive. The figures appear to bear this out.

Interestingly, also, increasing the rate of grant does not appear to have resulted in more money going to a reduced number of schemes. This was largely because the budget for the grant scheme was increased to support the change. In 2008 the budget was doubled from around £1.6m to around £3m. In year transfers and cuts since 2009 have meant that the budget for the scheme has varied between £3.3m and £4.6m in subsequent years (the lower number again in 2012/13 when rates were increased to 45%).

3. Demand – Number of applications.

This indicator is another way of recording demand. It can be expected to reflect changes in policy more quickly and to indicate if there is a danger that demand is outstripping the ability of the scheme to respond and if more budget should be sought or commitments reduced in some way, for example by capping the amount provided to a particular scheme.

Performance Indicator	Output measurement	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	2013/14
1.	Full take up of budget. £k	3,938 yes.	3,243 yes.	3,563 yes.	4,131 yes.	3,330 yes.	4,610 yes
2.	Number of schemes.	89	139	135	141	159	166
3.	Number of applications.	76	146	137	136	167	207

It can be seen that the number of applications rose dramatically after 2008/09 as did the number of schemes processed (reflective of quick turnaround from application to letter of offer). This occurred again in 2012/13. In 2013/14 there was a further increase in applications.

Average Investment per scheme.

This is the division of a year's spend by the number of schemes supported. It is a crude measure because it does not take account of the wide range of schemes (from major refurbishment to window replacement) that the grant supports. It does, however, illustrate if the range of support is consistent over time.

Performance Indicator	Output	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14
Average	Average	£44k	£23k	£26k	£29k	£21k	£28k

investment.	investment per scheme.						
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It can be seen that the increase in eligibility in 2008 reduced the average spend per scheme. This is reflective of the fact that because higher grade buildings are likely to have more high quality internal fittings they will get proportionately more grant for repair work. Increasing grant rates in 2012 did not have a significant impact upon the average investment per scheme.

4. Standard

A key part of the aim of the grant scheme is to ensure that the standard of work supported is high. Lack of support for repair works to grade B2 buildings from the mid 1980's meant that there was no DOE involvement in repairs to these buildings. Repairs do not need listed building consent. The relatively poor standard of some repair work reduced the architectural and historic interest of some buildings and may have contributed to decisions to remove them from the list when reviewed by the Second Survey.

DOE ensures high standards by issuing 'schedules of requirements' in regard to all schemes and by employing architects to check that work has been carried out to this standard before funds are released. It also tries to encourage owners to employ competent professionals by offering 75% towards the cost of related fees. A grant scheme review in 2013 proposed introducing a requirement that only professionals 'accredited in architectural conservation' be used in future grant aided schemes, but the introduction of this change was affected by budget issues and this has not yet been introduced.

Developing criteria to monitor this important function is difficult. All schemes are signed off that they are of an acceptable standard. However, it is known that reaching that standard for some schemes can involve significant input on the part of DOE architects. Introducing accreditation is seen as a way of raising standards and reducing the time demands on DOE's team, thereby increasing efficiency.

5. Condition. Overall condition of Northern Ireland’s listed Buildings.

In 2013, DOE commissioned a baseline survey on the condition of Northern Ireland’s listed buildings. It is intended that this work will be repeated at regular intervals and will help to provide evidence to consider the impact of its policies.

The key result of the survey is that in 2013/14, 76.9% of listed buildings were in a very good or average condition:

Overall condition of buildings

Very Good / Good	Average	Very Poor / Poor	Not known / Not Applicable
40.6%	36.3%	21.5%	1.6%

Factors influencing the condition of listed buildings include the economic climate of a period as well as the availability of support from sources other than the Listed Building Grant Scheme. It is therefore not a direct indicator of impact. However, this statistic provides the overall baseline that the Listed Building Grant Scheme sets out to improve.

Between 2002 and 2005, The Boyd Partnership¹ conducted a survey of 1,030 listed buildings². The methodology for this survey was slightly different to that of the 2013/14 survey; notably, the survey for the Boyd Report was carried out in two phases (a site survey and a desktop survey) and it assessed the interiors of the listed buildings as well as the exterior. Taking this difference into account, the Boyd Report found that 85.6% of the buildings were rated as ‘Good’ or ‘Average’. When compared to the 2013/14 survey, **this suggests there has been an overall decline in the condition of listed buildings since 2002-2005**. However, this trend would need to be tested in future surveys, which adopt the same methodology and rigour as the 2013/14 survey, to confirm if there is a definite statistically significant change.

The implication, therefore, is that the investment which was put into the scheme between 2005 and 2013/14, even though it directly helped in the conservation of 911³ listed buildings

¹ The Boyd Report, 1000 Listed Buildings Survey of Condition including observations on inappropriate works, December 2002 – April 2005, The Boyd Partnership

² Although the condition scoring matrix for the baseline survey 2013 is different from that used in the Boyd Report 2002 – 2005, there is obviously a relationship between the two. In the 2013 survey, ‘Very Good’ and ‘Good’ equates to ‘Good’ in the Boyd Report; ‘Average’ in the 2013 survey equates to ‘Average’ in the Boyd Report, and ‘Poor’ and ‘Very Poor’ in the 2013 survey equates to ‘Poor’ in the Boyd Report.

³ Compilation of DOE statistics from 2005/6 to 2012/13.

(c. 11% of the total), was not sufficient to increase the overall condition of listed buildings in Northern Ireland.

This baseline will continue to be monitored in future. It is proposed that a second baseline survey be commissioned in a few years time to assess overall condition at that time.

6. Condition – Differences between grades of listed building.

The 2013/14 baseline survey results show that buildings graded A & B+ were generally in better condition than those graded B1, B2 & B. The majority of buildings graded A & B+ (64.4%) were rated as 'Very Good / Good', whereas only 38.3% of buildings graded B1, B2 & B were rated as 'Very Good / Good'. In comparison, only 11.1% of buildings graded A & B+ were rated as 'Very Poor/Poor', compared to 22.5% of buildings graded B1, B2 & B. Statistical comparison with the 2005 survey in regard to these figures is not possible.

Statistics from the Environmental Statistics Report, reproduced below, show that since 2008 when all grades became eligible, that the support provided does not, in fact, approximate to the proportion of buildings in each grade. This is partly explained because grade B buildings are largely churches (the category was split in 1986 into B1 and B2 for grant purposes and churches were, and remain, ineligible at both grades). However, even accounting for this, a higher proportion of grant support relates to the top two grades of listed building than their numbers would imply. Conversely, a proportionately lower than expected number of support is associated with grade B2 buildings.

Percentage of grant applications in each grade and percentage of lb's in each grade.

Grade	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
A	11.2% Grant 2% of lb's	15% Grant 2% of lb's	15% Grant 2% of lb's	12% Grant 2% lb's	10% Grant 2% lb's	11 Grant 2% lb's
B+	24% Grant 6% of lb's	17% Grant 6% of lb's	16% Grant 7% of lb's	19% Grant 7% of lb's	21% Grant 7% of lb's	27% Grant 7% of lb's
B	0% Grant 21% of lb's	0% Grant 21% of lb's	10% Grant 20% of lb's	5% Grant 19% of lb's	7% Grant 18% of lb's	9% Grant 16% of lb's
B1	47% Grant 41% of lb's	52% Grant 41% of lb's	49% Grant 42% of lb's	52% Grant 41% of lb's	46% Grant 41% of lb's	37% Grant 41% of lb's
B2	16% Grant 28% of lb's	13% Grant 29% of lb's	10% Grant 29% of lb's	12% Grant 30% of lb's	16% Grant 32% of lb's	16% Grant 35% of lb's

An argument could be made, on the basis of this data that, if condition is worse and the current scheme is not resulting in more work in these grades, an adjustment

should be made to encourage more take up of grant in the lowest grade. This may help improve the overall condition in line with the stated aim of the scheme.

However, a counter argument is that, as the most important parts of our heritage, it is important that the higher grades are also supported when this is required. The Northern Ireland Audit Office report of March 2011 took the view that : *'resources should be directed towards the most important and vulnerable structures'* ⁴ They also noted that *'over the last five years 54% (of the grant) has been spent on the more important and rare categories. While this is a very positive outcome the expenditure pattern has happened more by chance than by design'* ⁵

7. Condition – Differences between public and private listed buildings.

The baseline report found that in 2013/14 there was no statistically significant difference between the overall condition of public buildings and churches. However, a higher proportion of private buildings were rated as 'Very Poor/Poor' (25.0%) than either public buildings (13.7%) or churches (11.6%).

(Table 3b) Overall Condition in Relation to the Ownership Type of Listed Buildings Surveyed in the Base Line Survey On The Condition Of Listed Buildings 2013

Ownership Type	Very Good/ Good			Average			Very poor / Poor			Not Known / Not Applicable			Total
	No.	%	Confidence Interval (95%)*	No.	%	Confidence Interval (95%)*	No.	%	Confidence Interval (95%)*	No.	%	Confidence Interval (95%)*	No.
Public	154	48.0	(43.3, 52.6)	114	35.5	(31.1, 40.0)	44	13.7	(10.5, 16.9)	9	2.8	(1.3, 4.3)	321
Private	626	36.3	(34.4, 38.2)	639	37.0	(35.1, 39.0)	432	25.0	(23.3, 26.8)	28	1.6	(1.1, 2.1)	1725
Church	195	55.1	(50.7, 59.5)	117	33.1	(28.9, 37.2)	41	11.6	(8.8, 14.4)	1	0.3	(0.0, 0.8)	354
Total	975	40.6	(39.0, 42.3)	870	36.3	(34.6, 37.9)	517	21.5	(20.1, 22.9)	38	1.6	(1.2, 2.0)	2400

As only higher grade churches are supported by grant aid, this appears initially surprising. It may reflect that such buildings are able to avail of wider sources of funding than may be available to private owners. **The statistics suggest that there may be merit in**

⁴ NIAO Protecting NI Listed Buildings, March 2011. P8.

⁵ NIAO Protecting NI Listed Buildings March 2011. P3.

considering if extra support should be provided to private owners if the aim of increasing overall good condition is to be achieved.

8. Condition – Differences between urban and rural listed buildings.

The baseline report found that in 2013/14, the proportion of buildings in urban areas that had an overall condition rated as 'Very Poor/Poor' (15.7%) was lower than either provincial (25.0%) or rural (22.5%) areas.

Outer Belfast had the highest proportion of buildings rated 'Very Good/Good' (60.3%), followed by Belfast (50.5%). These areas also had the lowest proportions of buildings rated 'Very Poor/Poor' (both 12.9%). There was very little difference in the overall condition of the buildings in the North, East and West & South.

This variation in condition is worthy of monitoring, and may suggest that investment should be targeted to counter this. However, given that between 70 and 170 buildings have been supported each year, and budgets are likely to be lower in future years, the extra complexities involved in such targeting may not be justified.

9. Buildings at Risk. Statistical proportion of listed buildings at risk.

In 2013/14 the baseline survey recorded that the majority (66.9%) of buildings were 'Not at Risk' and 17.8% of buildings were of 'Low' risk. 4.2% of buildings were classed as 'Critical', 0.3% of buildings were classed as 'High' risk and 8.5% were classed as 'Moderate' risk.

Table Error! No text of specified style in document..6 Risk category

Critical	High	Moderate	Low	Not at Risk	Not known / Not Applicable
4.2%	0.3%	8.5%	17.8%	66.9%	2.3%

This means that 30.8% of Northern Ireland's listed buildings were considered at some form of risk. This reduces to 4.5% when low and moderate risk are discounted. This last figure equates to c383 of Northern Ireland's c 8,500 listed buildings. The Built Heritage at Risk in Northern Ireland (BHARNI) register, which is based upon known buildings (but not a systematic survey) recorded 480 buildings in the same period. This means that it is statistically likely that some buildings at moderate risk are included within this figure.

If a building is at high or critical risk then there is clearly a concern in regard to their future. It is appropriate that support is targeted on them to ensure their survival. The NIAO report of 2011 made this recommendation:

'In our view, the revised grant scheme emerging from the current review should include a mechanism for meeting the target to remove 200 structures from the Built Heritage at Risk register by 2016. With that in mind, we recommend that NIEA prioritises the listed properties on the register and engages more proactively with their owners, to encourage them to improve their properties and, if relevant, to avail of grant aid'⁶.

DOE has undertaken such work. Effort has been put into active engagement with owners to encourage them to carry out works. The Ulster Architectural Heritage Society have also been financially supported to raise public awareness and to engage with and encourage owners. Grant aid was also raised for all buildings to 45% in 2012. This, it was thought, would help make the rescue of some long term cases more viable for their owners.

11 Buildings at Risk - Amount and proportion of budget deployed on Buildings at risk

The information below shows that the proportion of the grant spend deployed on Buildings at Risk has varied between 35% and 15% since 2008. It rose to 30% in 12/13 and 13/14 following the increase in grant rates. This certainly appears to reflect a boost in activity and perhaps the catalytic effect hoped for in regard to some difficult long term cases. A similar boost can be seen in the 08/09 and 09/10 figures. This followed the extension of support to grade B2 buildings. **These figures appear to confirm that extension of funding support helps to unlock action for buildings at risk.** The drop in the relative proportion deployed in this category in 2010/11 and 11/12 may suggest that a pent up demand was satisfied and in the first two years and perhaps that, it wasn't until rates were raised in 2012/13 that more difficult cases became viable. This rise in support helped to unlock more action.

It should be noted that, in all years, the proportion of grant provided for buildings at risk (between 15% and 35%) was much higher than their proportion as a part of the total number of listed buildings (5.6%). This means that efforts to target this category and encourage action have had a positive result.

⁶ Protecting NI's listed buildings, NIAO, 2011, P 5.

12. Buildings at Risk – Numbers of Buildings at Risk Supported.

The statistics on the number of buildings supported in each year do not reflect the variation in proportion or actual funds deployed on this category. These have varied between 16 and 24 buildings each year, the lower figure occurred in the year when the third highest spend was deployed and the highest number in one of the lower years for expenditure. This perhaps reflects the fact that such buildings come in all sizes and types.

Performance Indicator	Output measurement	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	2013/14
Buildings at risk	Amount and proportion of grant budget deployed on Buildings at risk	1,259k 32.0%	1,242k 38.3%	504k 14.1%	889k 21.5%	993k 29.8%	1,407k 30.5%
Buildings at risk	Numbers of buildings at risk supported	19	16	18	20	24	18
Buildings at risk	Number of Buildings saved and removed from BHARNI	29	17	18	12	15	32
Buildings at risk	Number saved with grant	9	5	5	5	7	11

13. Buildings at Risk – Numbers of Buildings at Risk saved and removed from BHARNI

This indicator records the action number of buildings recorded in the Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report (and HED records for 14/15). This does not mirror the number of buildings supported by grant aid. This reflects the fact that some buildings do not avail of grant aid to be removed and that some buildings may be grant aided in a scheme lasting more than one year before they are considered sufficiently conserved to be no longer regarded at risk.

14. Buildings at Risk saved with grant aid.

This indicator reflects buildings removed in a particular year in regard to grant assistance. If a grant offer was made prior to the building being saved and removed from BHARNI register then all payments made after removal date which are associated with that grant offer have also been considered as payments made towards a BHARNI building. This explains the much higher number of buildings recorded as supported each year. **The figures indicate that with the exception of 2012/13, in each year since 2008 only around a third of the buildings removed from the register each year, because they are not longer considered to be at risk, had been financially supported by the listed building grant scheme. This suggests that other factors, such as economic conditions or grant availability from other agencies may also be having a significant impact. Further research to understand these dynamics more fully would be useful.**

15 & 16 Support for Thatched Buildings.

Thatched buildings, along with buildings at risk, and buildings where owners are on qualifying benefits, are one of the three priority categories identified for support by the grant scheme. In acknowledgement of the vulnerable nature of this roof covering, which needs to be regularly renewed, grant assistance has been made available for repair works since the 1970's at 75% of eligible costs. This assistance has been credited with halting the loss of this vulnerable category of building⁷ which was in steep decline until the 1970's. Though there have continued to be losses due to fire and lack of maintenance, the number of listed thatched buildings has remained relatively stable since listing and its associated grant scheme was introduced in the early 1970's. The number of listed thatched buildings is now 152 and in 1995 at the end of the first comprehensive survey of the region it was 120.

Performance Indicator	Output measurement	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	2013/14
15. Thatched Buildings	Amount and prop of grant budget spent on thatched buildings.	121k 3.0%	93k 2.9%	125k 3.5%	193k 4.7%	158k 4.7%	182k 3.9%
16. Thatched buildings	Number of buildings supported.	15	16	20	24	24	21

⁷ Beyond the Facade, results of monitoring survey of NI's thatched buildings, Unpublished report to EHS, June 2006.

The table above illustrates that though a high rate of grant is offered, this has taken up a relatively small part of the overall grant budget since 2008. The second indicator however, illustrates that the number of thatched buildings supported in a year reached almost a sixth of the total number of thatched buildings in 2011/12 and 2012/13. At around 16.6% of the total number of listed buildings in this category, this is vastly higher than the overall rate of support for listed buildings generally. An average of 150 listed buildings have been supported in recent years, this equates to annual support for around 1.7% the c.8500 listed buildings in Northern Ireland. **The discrepancy reflects and underlines the fact that thatched roofs need regular maintenance to survive.**

The figures also record an increase in the number of schemes supported between 2010 and 2014. Though rates for roofs have remained high, rates for other works to such buildings increased from 35% to 45% in November 2012 and this may partly explain the increase. However, the increase might also reflect a change within the category. One change might be an increase in frequency of re-thatching of buildings. The average period between thatching is known to have reduced over the last thirty years and this may point to changes in climate or reducing skills among thatchers. The second issue highlights the importance of ensuring that staff skilled in assessing thatched roofs are employed to ensure such work is of a suitable standard.

17 &18. Owners on Qualifying Benefits.

This category is the third of the priority categories identified by the grant scheme. These buildings have been supported at 90% for eligible repairs since the 1970’s. The Department does not hold data on how many buildings have owners who fall into this category because ownership can change, but it is thought to be a relatively small proportion of the whole. Data in the indicators below appear to bear this out as a relatively small number of buildings have applied for support in the years since 2008. The support is important, however, because it helps to ensure that buildings, which are potentially vulnerable, do not fall into decay.

Performance Indicator	Output measurement	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14
17. Owners on qualifying benefits,	Amount and proportion of grant budget to support 90% cases.	64k 1.6%	60k 1.8%	170k 4.8%	171k 4.1%	196k 5.9%	90k 1.9%
18. Owners on qualifying benefits,	Number of buildings supported.	7	7	12	12	6	8

It can also be seen that though 90% support is provided, this has required relatively modest amounts of money. The average spend per building in 2013/14 for example was £11k. This reflects the fact that the buildings involved are normally quite modest.

The figures also show an increase in activity between 2010 and 2013. Costs and schemes supported doubled from the previous years. It is hard to identify a reason for this as there was no change to grant rates during the period.

Conclusion.

It can be seen that the range of indicators developed have illustrated a number of facts and trends in regard to the listed building grant scheme which assist in quantifying its impact relative to its aims. They have shown: strong continuing demand; that increasing availability of grant has increased take up; that increasing the rate of support has had the catalytic effect intended in 2012; that the increase in eligibility in 2008 also reduced the average spend per scheme as it brought in more lower grade buildings with less eligible works. Developing criteria to monitor standards has been difficult but introducing accreditation is seen as a way of raising standards and reducing the time demands on DOE's team, thereby increasing efficiency.

Condition survey data compiled in 2013/14 compared to a 2002-05 survey, however, suggests that there has been an overall decline in the condition of listed buildings despite direct investment in 911 listed buildings (c. 11% of the total) during the period. This means that combined public and private investment was not sufficient to increase the overall condition of listed buildings in Northern Ireland. There is, therefore, a continuing need to use financial and other support to address this.

Indicators have also shown that support provided has not approximated to the proportion of buildings in each grade. A higher proportion of grant schemes relate to the top two grades of listed building than their numbers would imply. While Audit review in the past has praised this apparent bias towards higher grades, compliance with the underlying aim of the scheme to bring all listed buildings up to a reasonable/ good condition would suggest that more attention should be focused upon grade B2 buildings where a higher proportion are in poor condition.

The statistics also suggest that there may be merit in considering if extra support should be provided to private owners, whose buildings have also been shown to be of worse condition

than public buildings or churches. Differences were also found in the condition of urban and rural listed buildings. This is considered worthy of monitoring. However, given the small number of schemes supported each year by the scheme, the complexities involved in such targeting may not be justified.

The indicators in regard to the three priority categories identified in the grant scheme all support their selection. The 2014 condition survey has demonstrated the ongoing issue of poor condition among a minority of listed buildings. Proactive targeting does appear to have paid dividends with a higher proportion of buildings in this category applying for support than standard listed buildings. Increasing grant aid does appear to have made it viable for some schemes to progress. However, a very interesting statistic is that only around a third of the buildings removed (as 'saved') from the list in most years received listed building grant aid. Further research into the factors influencing the removal of the others may be of use in developing ways of tackling this issue as we move into an era of reduced public funding in future years.

The statistics indicate that a high proportion of thatched buildings have been assisted by the grant scheme each year, this is to be expected. They also indicate that though supported at a high rate, the cost of support has remained a relatively small part of the grant scheme never exceeding in £200k in a single year. The number of schemes did, however, increase in more recent years. This did not reflect any change in support from the scheme and research to understand this change more fully would be beneficial.

The final category is assistance for owners on income support. Again, though very high rates of funding have been available, the cost to the department of supporting such owners has been relatively low.

In 2014/15 and 2015/16 the grant budget received £500k and £585k from the Carrier Bag Levy fund. The nature of the funding meant that support was restricted to expenditure on 'community led schemes'. These have been understood to be schemes of public benefit i.e. church conservation, district council schemes and schemes by community groups, charities or building preservation trusts. In 2015/16, schemes for district councils have not been included. While this budget has been welcome, and in a context of restricted funding has allowed some projects to move forward, the statistical review above suggests that future concentration on this area (as a fourth priority category) would not be justified. The condition survey (Indicator 8) makes clear that churches and public buildings are generally in better

condition than privately owned buildings. If the focus of the scheme is to be adjusted, it would be more appropriate that it move away from this category towards private buildings. This is not to downplay the important work of charities in tackling buildings at risk, but this is already regarded as a priority category.

Listed Building Grant Scheme Assessment Framework.

Aim of Listed Building Grant Scheme: *To bring listed buildings up to a reasonable / good state of repair (condition) and thereafter, maintain them in a good state of repair (condition) through preventative maintenance’.*

Changes in scheme		Grant aid extended to B2 grade buildings and raised from 20 to 35%				Grant aid raised to 45% from Nov 2012.	Loo’s largely stopped from Nov 2013. 5 Year baseline survey of condition carried out.
Performance Indicator	Output measurement	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	2013/14
1. Demand	Full take up of budget. £k	3,938 yes.	3,243 yes.	3,563 yes.	4,131 yes.	3,330 yes.	4,610 yes
2. Demand	Number of schemes.	89	139	135	141	159	166
3. Demand	Number of applications.	76	146	137	136	167	
4. Average investment.	Average investment per scheme.	£44k	£23k	£26k	£29k	£21k	
5. Standard	Work to req’ standard.	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
6. Condition	Statistical % of listed buildings of good/fair/ av condition.						76.9% (drop from 85.6% in 2005)
7. Condition	Statistical difference between high and low grade condition.						Yes. 11.1% of A B+ rated as ‘Very Poor/Poor’, compared to 22.5% of buildings graded B1, B2 & B.
8. Condition	Statistical difference between public and private						Yes. Higher prop’ of private lb’s rated as ‘Very Poor/Poor 25.0%) than either public buildings (13.7%) or churches (11.6%).

9. Condition	Statistical difference between rural and urban						Yes. The proportion of buildings in urban areas that had an overall condition rated as 'Very Poor/Poor' (15.7%) was lower than either provincial (25.0%) or rural (22.5%) areas.
10. Buildings at risk.	Statistical proportion of listed buildings at risk						30.8% considered at some form of risk. This reduces to 4.5% when low and moderate risk are discounted. This would equate to c.383 listed buildings (BHARNI records 480 buildings)
11. Buildings at risk	Amount and proportion of grant budget deployed on Buildings at risk	1,259k 32.0%	1,242 k 38.3 %	504k 14.1 %	889k 21.5 %	993k 29.8 %	1,407k 30.5%
12. Buildings at risk	Numbers of buildings at risk supported	19	16	18	20	24	18
13. Buildings at risk	Number of Buildings saved and removed from BHARNI	29	17	18	12	15	32
14. Buildings at risk	Number saved with grant	9	5	5	5	7	11
15. Thatched Buildings	Amount and proportion of grant budget deployed on thatched buildings.	121k 3.0%	93k 2.9%	125k 3.5%	193k 4.7%	158k 4.7%	182k 3.9%
16. Thatched buildings	Number of buildings supported.	15	16	20	24	24	21
17. Owners on qualifying benefits,	Amount and proportion of grant budget to support 90% cases.	64k 1.6%	60k 1.8%	170k 4.8%	171k 4.1%	196k 5.9%	90k 1.9%

Performance Measurement

18. Owners on qualifying benefits,	Number of buildings supported.	7	7	12	12	6	8
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