
Heritage Transformed in Wales and Northern Ireland, 2020-23

End of Programme Report: 2020-23

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Executive Summary



Norwegian Church, Cardiff Bay

The Architectural Heritage Fund is extremely grateful to our funding partners which have enabled the successful delivery of the *Heritage Transformed in Wales and Northern Ireland* programme 2020-2023.

We hope this report provides an insight into the impact that has been made possible through our partnership.

The Architectural Heritage Fund in Wales and Northern Ireland

Since 1976, the Architectural Heritage Fund (AHF) has worked with groups across the UK to restore and adapt historic buildings for new uses that will benefit local communities. Since April 2020, our funding partners funders the Garfield Weston Foundation, the Pilgrim Trust, Cadw - Welsh Government's Historic Environment Service and the Historic Environment Division of the Department for Communities in Northern Ireland (DfC) - has supported *Heritage Transformed in Wales and Northern Ireland*.

This programme was designed to provide advice and guidance from our in-country team - Adam Hitchings (Development Manager, Wales) and Rita Harkin (Support Officer NI) - as well as grants.

Project Viability Grants are the AHF's earliest stage of grant, normally enabling a Project Viability Report that market tests proposed end uses and considers whether they are appropriate to the building, and/or a Condition Report on a building. These grants are often completed to help an organisation decide whether to take on building ownership or not.

Project Development Grants usually follow after viability has been established - they support a wide range of work, including the completion of architectural plans and achievement of necessary permissions for planning and listed building work, business plans and organisational development, capital fundraising and other project development elements up to the start of capital works.

Capital Works Grants have provided organisations with the ability to complete emergency works to consolidate structures and arrest the deterioration of historic fabric as well as, in some cases, forming part of larger conservation and regeneration projects.



Family Wing, Grade A listed Brownlow House, Lurgan

Executive Summary

Building on the successes of the previous programme, *Heritage Transformed in Wales and Northern Ireland* has achieved the following key outcomes:

- 427 projects advised and guided by our experienced Officers, in many cases from initial enquiry through application into delivery;
- 124 grants totaling £1,721,037 to 94 discrete projects across the two countries; and
- Successful advocacy for the social and economic value of heritage-led regeneration, leading directly to significantly larger grants budgets and new, innovative programmes driving funding from diverse government sources to the conservation and reuse of heritage.

In April 2020, we anticipated a total grants budget over three years of £240,000; the more than 700% increase in funding delivered has been possible because of an increase in government funding, realised due to the demonstrable impacts of AHF's support. In Wales, Cadw increased its annual contribution from £29,400 to £350,000, and this figure is now confirmed at least as far as the next Welsh government cycle. In Northern Ireland, the Village Catalyst programme, which focuses on projects that combat rural poverty and social isolation has had significant investment from the DfC and the Department for Agriculture, the Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA): £4.2 million in capital funding has been committed, following on from £170,000 for early-stage support delivered via AHF over the last year.

In 2022, the AHF commissioned an independent external research provider, ERS Consultancy, to evaluate our work, including a survey of all funding recipients since April 2020. Nine out of 10 respondents (246 responses) would recommend the AHF to other projects, with the following typical of anonymous feedback received:

“The combination of expert, practical knowledge of the heritage sector, built up over time, with the ability to target funding where needed has enabled AHF to punch above its weight and to empower local organisations to take responsibility for their own heritage. Long may this continue.”



The Vogue Cinema, Killeel— NI Community Asset Transfer project

Cymru | Wales: Programme and Activity

Cymru | Wales

Since 2021, our strategic funding partnership with Welsh Government, through Cadw has meant a greater number of organisations across Wales have benefited from the impact of our early project stage grants and capital grants. This developed as a result of the success of this programme and its predecessor both of which were enabled thanks to the generous funding support from the Garfield Weston Foundation.

With the enhanced programme budget since 2020 we have awarded 62 grants to 48 organisations totalling £1,046,002. 73% (35) of the organisations were new to AHF.

Following a hiatus caused by COVID, Adam resurrected the pilot scheme to demonstrate the viability of adapting redundant listed chapels into affordable housing. Numerous meetings were held with the partner organisations (Housing Justice Cymru, Cadw, Cwmpas and NLHF) to re-establish their interest and commitment to the scheme. Adam worked closely with Housing Justice Cymru to produce a shortlist of three demonstrator projects which were agreed by the partners. After working intensely with the three chapel organisations the first grant was awarded in December 2022 for Tredegarville Baptist Church in Cardiff.



A second application is expected in early 2023/24 for Gibeon Chapel, Tai Bach, Port Talbot once a housing association partner for the project can be identified and signed up. A third project in north-west Wales will need to be found after Salem Chapel, Pwllheli was sold by the Presbyterian Church in Wales to a private owner. Possible candidate buildings have been identified and a decision will be made by the partnership later in 2023.

Strong partnerships have been fostered with Cwmpas and the Coalfields Regeneration Trust. Both organisations regularly referred groups to Adam including a number of public

houses which are now in community ownership following successful community share offers such as the Grade II listed Ty'n Llan in Llandwrog and the Grade II listed Glan yr Afon in Pennal. This led to grants being awarded to progress the proposals through RIBA Work stages towards the start of capital works.



Adam regularly represented AHF at the Wales Funders' Forum, and Historic Environment Group (Wales) meetings raising awareness of issues affecting the historic built environment / social enterprise sector in Wales. He took an active part in a Historic Environment Group working groups focussing on raising awareness of local heritage organisations and a formal response to Welsh Government's Programme for Government.

Meeting Welsh Government's Transforming Towns Senior Management Team proved a useful exchange of information and helped to raise AHF's profile. This has potential to become a strategic partnership with a High Street-focussed programme in Wales. Merthyr Tydfil Synagogue is the first project to benefit from this link-up with a £107,800 grant being awarded towards the project's development, matching a National Lottery Heritage Fund first round award of nearly £400,000.



Tŷ'n Llan Public House, Llandwrog, Gwynedd



The power of community action — saving and re-opening a historic village pub

Tŷ'n Llan was built in a simple classical style in the 1830s by the Newboroughs of Glynllifon. The pub comprises a three-bay range with a central doorway, flanked by strongly projecting hipped roof wings, and fronted by an iron-columned veranda. Tŷ'n Llan remained as a public house until its closure in 2017, taking with it the last community meeting space in Llandwrog.

Menter Ty'n Llan is a community benefit society established in 2021 to save the Grade II-listed Ty'n Llan and re-open it as a community-owned facility. In April of that year, the Society raised £464,800 from 1,013 investors through a community share offer and purchased the site. By December, the pub was open again after five years of closure, and the community response has been so strong that the Ty'n Llan has since remained open five days per week, hosting weekly chair yoga classes, coffee mornings, a Welsh learners club, a walking club, a gardening club and a youth project, alongside operating as a pub. Once again, the building has become the focal point of the community.

An initial AHF Project Development Grant in June 2021 funded a design team led by a conservation-accredited architect to progress the project's plans to RIBA Stage 4 for listed building consent and planning permission, as well as archaeology, asbestos, ecology and drainage surveys. A second Project Development Grant, awarded in November 2021, is funding a part-time coordinator post over a 12-month period to manage the project, its professional advisors and volunteers.

<https://tynllan.cymru/>

AHF Funding

Project Development Grant - £14,080 (2021)

Project Development Grant - £20,000 (2021)

Summary of AHF Awards in Wales 2020-23

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	3 year totals
Enquiries	104	89	97	290
Applications	24	23	22	69
Project Viability Grants	8 awards £40,141	5 awards £40,546	7 awards £46,832	20 awards £127,519
Project Development Grants	8 awards £73,438	10 awards £148,146	10 awards £162,735	28 awards £383,321
Capital Work Grants	6 awards £233,164	4 awards £151,000	4 awards £150,000	14 awards £534,164
Total	22 awards £346,743	19 awards £339,692	21 awards £359,567	62 awards £1,046,002

Some of projects awarded AHF grants in Wales



Northern Ireland: Programme and Activity

Northern Ireland

Both the core Heritage Transformed and Village Catalyst programmes have enabled charities and social enterprises across Northern Ireland to lead on community and heritage-regeneration projects in areas of need.

The innovative Village Catalyst partnership programme, which began in 2019, focuses on finding sustainable economic uses that address rural poverty and social isolation and has helped to convey the vital message that the repurposing of buildings at risk (over 900 on the register at present) can deliver across a number of Programme for Government objectives.

The Village Catalyst pilot projects (also picked up by BBC NI) established the value of the cross-cutting concept and the resultant additional funding from the Department for Communities (DfC) allowed 13 Project Viability Grants, 9 Project Development Grants and 2 Capital Works Grants to be awarded to a variety of projects involving 16 listed buildings and a range of building types, spread across NI. This brought the number of awards to 68, totalling £675,035 during the programme.



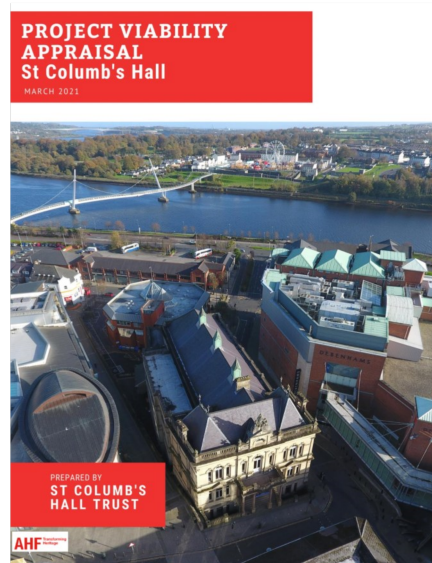
Guidance for applicants



The 4 pilot projects have now been completed and serve as valuable case studies for the groups coming in their wake, which are gearing up to apply for capital funding, with ongoing advice and support from the AHF and DfC.

The pilots demonstrated that the diversity of uses involved - from childcare to wellbeing hubs to community-led affordable housing and co-working spaces —attracted a diversity of funders too. AHF's Heritage Impact Fund has facilitated loan finance on some of the projects.

Early stage support has enabled groups like Ederney Community Development Trust and St. Columb's Hall Trust to carry out detailed conservation-led condition surveys, evidence local need and build their capacity, confidence and the case for additional investment.



Viability work has the wider and deeper benefit of helping to broker conversations and develop relationships with key stakeholders, including other similar projects emerging in their area, growing the grassroots regeneration ecosystem as a result.

Rita represents AHF at the Funders' Forum NI, where collaborative working is strongly encouraged, and the Historic Environment Stakeholders' Group.

She contributed to the AHF commissioned *Heritage Enabled Regeneration* research paper and has been engaging with DfC, the NI Housing Executive and Housing Associations and QUB about addressing housing need through reuse of vacant historic assets.

Rita has taken the lead on organising events in partnership with the Heritage Trust Network in her capacity as a member of the HTN NI branch, including *Heritage Means Business* in Derry on 11th May 2023.

The Woolstore, Caledon, Country Tyrone



19th-century woolstore restored as childcare facility

Dating back to the early 1800s, the Woolstore is a three-storey stone building located in the centre of Caledon Conservation Area. It is one of the last physical links to the vast woollen mill which once stood at the heart of the village. The Woolstore is highly significant to the local community and serves as a valuable reminder of Caledon's industrial past following the demolition of the mill in the 1980s.

Caledon Regeneration Partnership (CRP) is a not-for-profit organisation with a long history of preserving historic buildings in the village. Keen to save the Woolstore, CRP came to the AHF to explore how they could repurpose it.

In 2019, the AHF awarded the group a Project Viability Grant to test ideas for the building's reuse, consequently establishing the need for a childcare facility—through the stakeholder engagement it became clear that the local primary school was under threat of closure without wraparound care.

The Support Officer identified the Woolstore as a candidate for the Village Catalyst pilot programme, teeing it up for investment as part of this innovative cross-departmental initiative between the Department for Communities (DfC) and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA). In 2021, CRP was awarded DfC Covid Recovery funding via a Capital Works Grant administered by the AHF. The National Lottery Heritage Fund came in as the major funder, supported by a cocktail of other investors, including the private owners, Caledon Estates, Mid Ulster District Council and Ulster Garden Villages.

The Woolstore has undergone a series of sensitive conservation works including the addition of a sympathetic contemporary extension designed by award-winning architect, Mark Hackett, featured in the Architects' Journal. Opened in February 2022, the building provides 36 childcare places for children (ages 0-5) and 16 after-school places and employs 15 people.

The project has been a great boost to the confidence of the village and CRP is now embarking on a mixed-use listed building revival project directly opposite.

AHF Funding

Project Viability Grant - £3,000 (2019)

Capital Works Grant - £30,000 (2021)

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	3 year totals
Enquiries	46	40	51	137
Applications	27	20	16	63
Project Viability Grants	15 awards £95,355	4 awards £12,600	2 awards £15,240	21 awards £123,195
Project Development Grants	7 awards £59,760	4 awards £22,400	3 awards £29,680	14 awards £111,840
Capital Grants	5 awards £150,000	-	-	5 awards £150,000
Sub-total	27 awards £305,115	8 awards £35,000	5 awards £44,920	46 awards £385,035
Village Catalyst Project Viability Grants	-	8 awards £70,000	5 awards £50,000	13 awards £120,000
Village Catalyst Project Development Grants	-	3 awards £50,000	6 awards £120,000	9 awards £170,000
Sub-total	-	11 awards £120,000	11 awards £170,000	22 awards £290,000
Total	27 awards £305,115	19 awards £155,000	16 awards £214,920	68 awards £675,035



Village Catalyst candidates



Cathedral School and Pump St. Convent, Derry, Old Market House, Bangor, Riddel's Warehouse

Conclusion

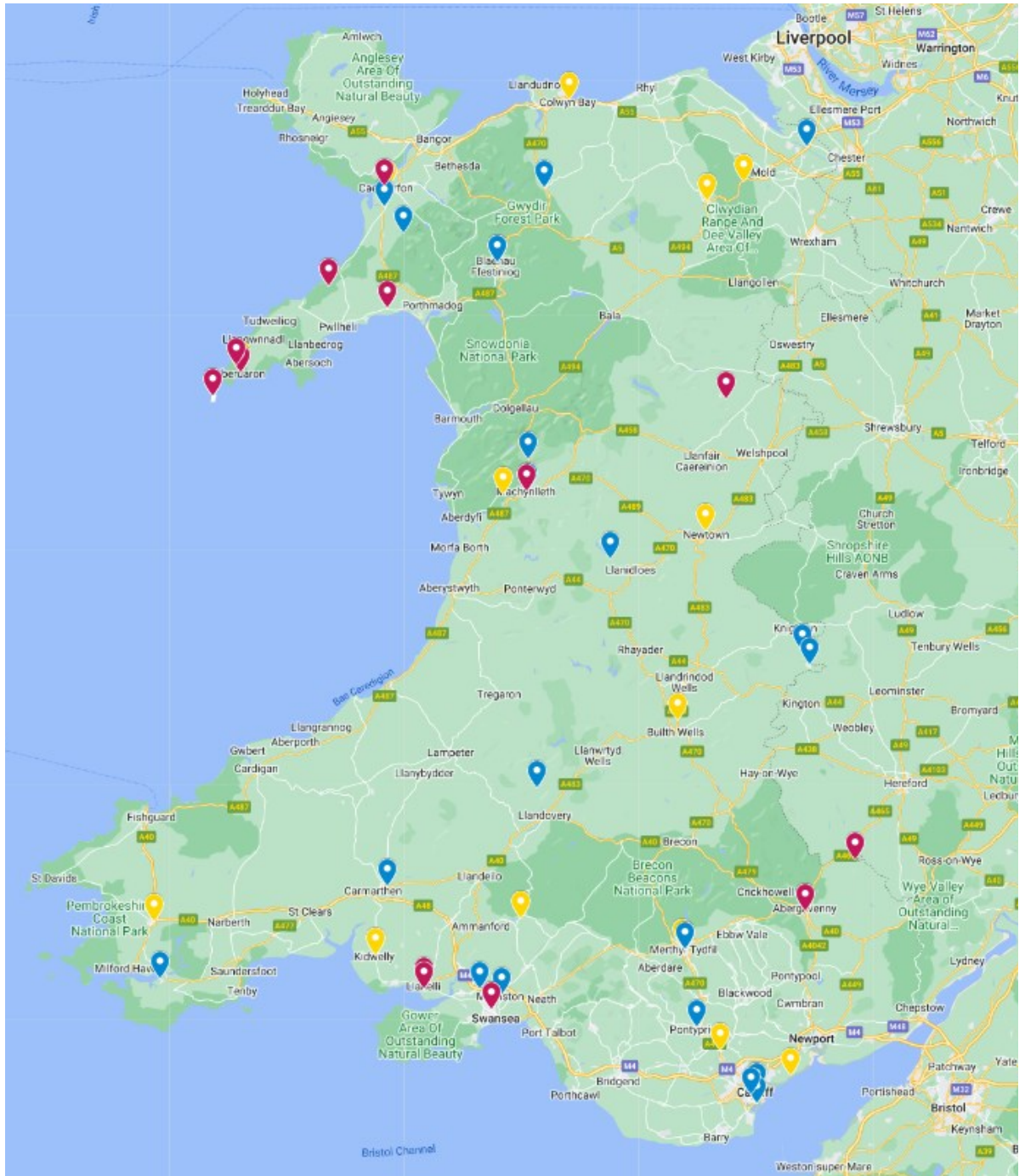
This programme has coincided with and witnessed the sustained effects of COVID-19 on society and the heritage and community sectors, but we at the AHF were pleased to be able to keep our usual programmes running throughout the period. *Heritage Transformed in Wales and Northern Ireland* continued throughout to offer advice and support for projects, both those already underway before COVID struck and those that were initiated during the crisis. These organisations and their projects will be pivotal in helping communities to recover and become more resilient and self-sufficient. Thanks to the generous support of our funding partners, the Pilgrim Trust, Garfield Weston Foundation, Cadw, and the Department for Communities, the programme will achieve a lasting impact across Wales and Northern Ireland in terms of conserving important historic buildings, strengthening local economies and providing high-quality homes for essential services.



Pilgrim
Trust

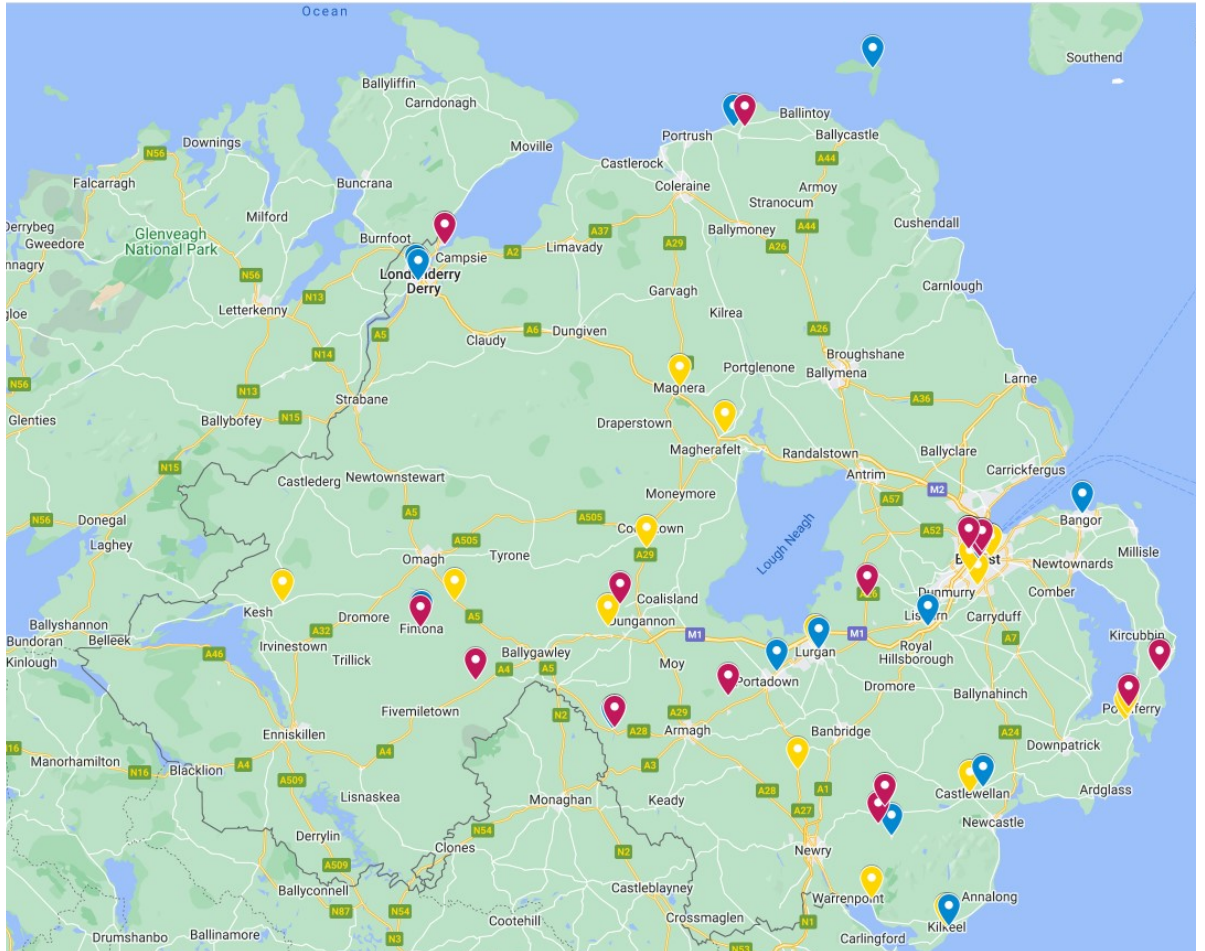





Appendix 2: Map of Wales Grant Awards

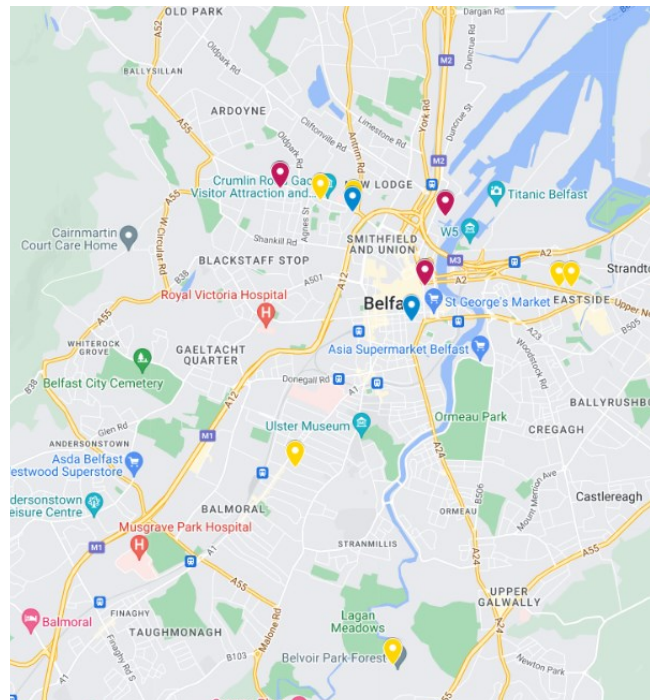


-  Project Viability Grants
-  Project Development Grants
-  Capital Grants

Appendix 4: Map of Northern Ireland Grant Awards



-  Project Viability Grants
-  Project Development Grants
-  Capital Grants



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