

Keepers of the Past

LESSON 1

Caring for the Past



ARCHAEOLOGY
time in transition

IT'S ABOUT TIME 2

**Aim(s)**

To give the students a general overview of how archaeology functions in Ireland today.

**Objective(s)**

To give the students an insight into how State and other agencies work together to safeguard our archaeological heritage.

**Time Period**

Present Day.

**KEY INFORMATION****Lesson**

- Since the National Monuments Act was enacted in 1930 the Government has regulated all archaeological activity in the state.
- The National Monuments (Amendment) Act of 1994 established the statutory Record of Monuments and Places (RMP).
- The Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht is responsible for archaeological *monuments*, The National Museum of Ireland is responsible for archaeological *artefacts*.

Context

- There are in excess of 148,000 records in the national database of the Archaeological Survey of Ireland of which over 136,500 relate to archaeological monuments.
- The Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht is responsible for archaeological heritage and issues excavation licences.

**METHODOLOGY & MEDIUM**

- Instruction
- Visual–PowerPoint
- **Student Handout** Archaeology in Ireland

**SECTIONS**

Section 1 Legal Protection

Section 2 The National Monuments Service

Section 3 The Planning System

Section 4 Protection and Awareness

Section 5 The Role of Other Heritage Agencies



Key Question(s) What legal protection exists for our archaeological heritage?

Slide 1 Caring for the Past

We will now look at how State and other agencies work together to safeguard our archaeological heritage.

Slide 2 The National Monuments Act

- Since the National Monuments Act was enacted in 1930 the Government has regulated all archaeological activity in the state.
- Though the Act has been amended on a number of occasions (1954, 1987, 1994, and 2004) it remains the foundation legislation for the protection of our archaeological heritage.

Slide 3 The Valetta Convention

- Also important is The European Charter for the Protection and Management of the Archaeological Heritage (commonly called the Valetta Convention).
- Ireland signed the Charter in 1992, and ratified it in 1997.

Slide 4 The Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

- Under the *National Monuments Act* the person responsible for the protection of our archaeological heritage is the *Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (AHG)*.
- The section in the Department responsible for archaeological heritage is the *National Monuments Service*.

SECTION 2 The National Monuments Service



Key Question(s) What is the role of the National Monuments Service?

Slide 5 The National Monuments Service

The National Monuments Service of the Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht, is divided into five units. These are

- The Archaeological Survey of Ireland.
- The Underwater Archaeology Unit.
- Planning and Licensing Unit.
- Protection of Monuments Unit.
- Conservation of National Monuments.

In order to understand the workings of the *National Monuments Service* we will look at each of these units in turn.

Slide 6 The Archaeological Survey of Ireland

- The Archaeological Survey of Ireland, part of the National Monuments Service, is responsible **for** compiling a base-line inventory of the known archaeological monuments in the State.
- **The** National database of monuments is continually being updated and supplemented as additional monuments are discovered.
- There are currently **over** 136,500 archaeological monuments in its database.

Slide 7 The Record of Monuments and Places

The National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 **established** the **Record of Monuments and Places (RMP)**. This statutory list includes **monuments** with known locations and places where it is believed there are monuments. A RMP for each county in the State was **issued** between 1995 and 1998: these are currently being revised. The **RMP** is primary instrument for protection archaeological monuments in the State – legal protection applies to all monuments on RMP.

Slide 8 Locations of Archaeological Monuments

The large archive and national database of monuments are being continually updated and supplemented as additional monuments are discovered. Included in this update are the results of the extensive peatland surveys and monuments discovered in the course of licensed archaeological investigations. This slide is a screenshot from **www.archaeology.ie** and shows Dingle, Co. Kerry. The red dots mark the locations of archaeological monuments.

Slide 9 The Archaeological Inventory Series

The Archaeological Survey of Ireland is active in the promotion of the archaeological heritage and committed to making the information more widely available. This has resulted in the publication of the Archaeological Inventory series. Twenty-one volumes, covering sixteen counties, have been completed to date. Since 2007 the records of the Archaeological Survey of Ireland can be accessed on the National Monuments Service website: **www.archaeology.ie**. The data on this site is revised and updated regularly.

Slide 10 Underwater Archaeology Unit (UAU)

Established as the Maritime Survey Unit in 1997 to quantify Ireland's shipwreck heritage, this brief was expanded in 2000 when the Underwater Archaeology Unit (UAU) was set up within the National Monuments Service, tasked with the management and protection of Ireland's underwater cultural heritage. The work of the UAU includes:

- Shipwreck Inventory compilation
- Planning and Licensing assessment
- Enforcement & Inspection
- Monitoring of diving
- Survey & Excavation of sites
- Liaising with divers, fishermen and the general public.

Slide 11 Protected Shipwrecks

The Underwater Archaeology Unit has recorded over 12,000 shipwrecks in Irish jurisdictional waters. All wrecks over 100-years old are protected under the 1987 National Monuments (Amendment) Act. Diving on protected sites or for archaeological reasons is prohibited without a licence issued by the National Monuments Service.

Slide 12 Underwater Archaeology Unit: Survey and Excavation

The Underwater Archaeology Unit has undertaken several surveys and excavations of archaeological sites. These include: the 1588 Spanish Armada wreck La Trinidad Valencera in Co. Donegal; the early 16th-century Drogheda Boat wreck in the River Boyne, Co. Louth; the early-medieval crannog in Lough Derryvaragh, Co. Westmeath and the early-medieval bridge at Clonmacnoise, Co. Offaly.

Slide 13 Planning and Licensing Unit

- Under the Planning Act of 2000 the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht can recommend that archaeological conditions be attached to planning permissions.
- This role is performed by the **Planning and Licensing Unit** of National Monuments Service in conjunction with the Local Authority.

SECTION 3 The Planning System



Key Question(s) How does the planning system deal with archaeology?

Slide 14 The Planning System

This diagram shows how the planning system deals with archaeological matters. The sequence is as follows

- An applicant submits a planning application to the relevant Local Authority.
- The Local Authority checks the application against the **Record of Monuments and Places** (RMP) to see if it impinges on an archaeological monument.
- If it does impinge the planning application is sent to the Planning and Licensing Unit.
- The Planning and Licensing Unit will then, on behalf of the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, issue a recommendation to the Local Authority. This might be
 - Outright refusal.
 - Permission granted with archaeological conditions.
 - No comment.
- The Local Authority will then issue or refuse planning to the applicant, incorporating the Minister's recommendations.
- Many Local Authorities now employ their own archaeologists to advise them in this process.

Slide 15 Excavation Licences

- Under the *National Monuments Act* archaeological excavation may only be carried out under a licence issued by the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
- The Planning and Licensing Unit issue these licences, under strict guidelines, to suitably qualified archaeologists.
- Many of these licences are issued in the context of a planning application where a development has been allowed on condition that an archaeological excavation is carried out in advance of the development.
- This ensures that the archaeological record is ‘preserved by record’ (i.e. all features and deposits of an archaeological nature are carefully recorded and removed by the process of an archaeological excavation).

Slide 16 Development and Archaeology

- The Environmental Impact Assessment process is central to the protection of the archaeological heritage in respect of large-scale development projects.
- The “Developer Pays” principle applies in relation to archaeological costs arising from a development.
- In recent years the Department has put in place Codes of Practice with agencies involved in the delivery of large-scale infrastructural projects which by their nature can have significant archaeological implications.

Slide 17 Infrastructure Developments

- The Planning and Licensing Unit also deals with infrastructural developments like new roads and pipelines.
- Codes of Practice between National Monuments Service and authorities like the National Roads Authority and Bord Gáis, have now been agreed.

(Bodies like the National Roads Authority now have their own in-house archaeological staff to advise them on archaeological matters and liaise with National Monuments Service’s Planning and Licensing Unit).

Slide 18 Bord Gáis

Bord Gáis have been involved with archaeology since the first large-scale pipelines were constructed in the 1980s.

- The route of the pipeline is selected to avoid all known archaeological monuments.
- These pipelines have a wide corridor (see photo) which is archaeologically tested before construction of the pipeline itself, to discover if any previously unknown archaeological monument is present.
- These are then archaeologically excavated. In this way the important Neolithic house at Tankardstown, Co. Limerick was discovered during the construction of a gas pipeline and was fully excavated.

Slide 19 The National Roads Authority

In June 2000, a Code of Practice was agreed and launched between the National Roads Authority and the National Monuments Service.

- The purpose of this Code is to provide a framework within existing legislation and policies to enable the National Roads Authority (NRA) to progress with its programme of work whilst having regard to protecting the archaeological heritage (see *Archaeology at Work* T3,U2 & U3).
- The NRA directly employs a number of archaeologists. The role of these archaeologists is to manage the archaeological aspects of national road projects. This incorporates the pre-planning stages of road design, the on-site archaeological excavations, and the post-excavation and publication of the results.

The slide shows, on the left, pre-construction test trenches laid out to test for any previously undetected archaeological features which may lie in the line of the proposed road. The slide on the right is an aerial photograph of excavated features at Collierstown, Co. Meath (the M3 motorway).



Key Question(s) How does the Government raise awareness about the protection of our archaeological heritage?

Slide 20 Monument Protection Unit

The **protection** of our archaeological heritage is a core function of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and is implemented through the provisions of the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004. All recorded archaeological monuments are protected under the terms of this legislation.

The Monument Protection Unit, comprising archaeological officers within the National Monuments Service, co-ordinates the Department's response to reports of threat or **damage** to archaeological sites and monuments. The unit also deals **with** notifications of intention to carry out work at or in relation to Recorded or Registered Monuments in accordance with the Acts.

Slide 21 Information Booklets

- Booklets published by the National Monuments Service, like *'Irish Field Monuments'* and *'Good Farming Practice and Archaeology'*, help to inform landowners about archaeological monuments and how best to care for them. These are distributed widely amongst the farming community and the general public.
- The Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, in conjunction with the Limerick Education Centre, have produced a pack for Primary Schools, called *Archaeology in the Classroom—It's About Time!* This, with the present Transition Year pack, are seen as an important part of the Department's outreach programme.

Slide 22 Good Farming Practice

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine regulates farming in Ireland, with schemes such as **Good Farming Practice**. This states **that**

- Farmers must comply with the National Monuments **Act**.
- Monuments should not be interfered with through activities such **as**
 - Ground **disturbance**.
 - **Excavation**.
 - Construction of **buildings**.
 - **Afforestation**.
- No material of any type should be removed from or dumped on archaeological **monuments**.

In effect, any farmer who deliberately damages an archaeological monument is liable to have all his subsidies and grants withdrawn.

Another important development is the **Rural Environmental Protection Scheme** (REPS). This gives 100% protection to any archaeological monuments on the land of participating landowners.



Key Question(s) What other Government funded bodies have responsibilities for the preservation of our archaeological heritage?

Slide 23 The Office of Public Works

On 1st January 2004 responsibility for National Monuments and Historic Properties (that is, properties in the ownership or guardianship of the State) was divided between the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (now the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht) and the Office of Public Works (OPW).

- In essence, the OPW now has responsibility for the day-to-day running and maintenance of all National Monuments and Historic Properties, whereas the Department is responsible for overall policy.
- Many millions of Irish people and foreign visitors, visit the heritage sites each year to learn something of Ireland's history and heritage. Guide services, interpretative displays and publications are provided by OPW to assist the visitor in this educational process.

The slide shows a number of these places

- Top-left to right: Athenry Castle, Co. Galway; The main Guard, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary; Donegal Castle, Co. Donegal.
- Right side—from top: Brú na Bóine Visitor Centre (Newgrange), Co. Meath; Rock of Cashel, Co. Tipperary; Portumna Castle, Co. Galway.

Slide 24 National Monuments Conservation Unit

There are some 750 monuments in the ownership or guardianship of the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. The archaeologists in the National Monuments Service play a major role in the protection, management, interpretation and presentation of these monuments.

These archaeologists, working in close collaboration with the conservation architects of the Office of Public Works, carry out survey, excavation, research, interpretation and publication. This work has enhanced our understanding of some of Ireland's premier national monuments.

Two examples are shown here. Important archaeological excavations were carried out at Trim Castle, Co. Meath and Poul nabrone Portal Tomb by the Conservation of National Monuments Unit.

Slide 25 National Museum of Ireland

Whilst the National Monuments Service of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht is responsible for *monuments* the other main body with responsibility for Ireland's archaeological heritage is the National Museum of Ireland.

The National Museum of Ireland—Ard-Mhúsaem na hÉireann—is funded by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. However, its day-to-day operations are overseen by The Council of National Cultural Institutions, which also oversees the other six National Cultural Institutions

- National Archives.
- National Concert Hall.
- National Library of Ireland.
- Chester Beatty Library.
- Irish Museum of Modern Art.
- National Gallery of Ireland.

Slide 26 Divisions Within the National Museum

The National Museum of Ireland has four divisions

- The **Archaeology and History** section is housed in Kildare Street, beside the Dáil. This is the repository for all archaeological objects found in Ireland. This museum houses over 2,000,000 artefacts that range in date between 7,000 BC and the late-medieval period. Exhibitions include the finest collection of prehistoric gold artefacts in Western Europe, outstanding examples of metalwork from the Iron Age like the Broighter Hoard, as well as the Museum's world-renowned collection of ecclesiastical objects and jewellery including the Ardagh Chalice, the Tara Brooch and the Derrynaflan Hoard.

The other three sections are

- **Natural History**, housed in Merrion Street.
- **Decorative Arts and History**, housed in Collins Barracks.
- **Country Life**, housed at Turlough Park, near Castlebar in Co. Mayo.

Slide 27 The Irish Antiquities Division

Under the National Monuments Acts finds of archaeological objects must be reported to the National Museum of Ireland.

- The *Irish Antiquities Division* is responsible for investigating such reports, as well as for the curatorial care, conservation, research, cataloguing and management of the collections, and the development and upkeep of public archaeological exhibitions.

Slide 28 The Heritage Council

Two other institutions which play an important role in protecting the archaeological heritage of the State are **The Heritage Council** and **The Discovery Programme**.

- The **Heritage Council** was established under the *Heritage Act 1995*. Its role is to propose policies and priorities for the identification, protection, preservation and enhancement of the national heritage, which includes the archaeological heritage. The Council has a particular responsibility to promote interest, education, knowledge and pride in the national heritage. It does this by organising events like *National Heritage Week* and by publishing the magazine *Heritage Outlook*.

Slide 29 The Discovery Programme

The **Discovery Programme** was established by the Government in 1991.

- Its aim is to enhance our knowledge of Ireland's past. It undertakes specific projects aimed at specific areas of Irish archaeology. The projects take place over a number of years and usually includes a programme of archaeological excavations.
- Two examples of projects being undertaken by the Discovery Programme are the preparation of the Conservation Plan for the Hill of Tara and the Late Iron Age and Roman Ireland project.

WEB LINKS

WWW.



Irish Archaeology on the Internet

www.xs4all.nl/~tbreen/links.html

Department of Arts,
Heritage and the Gaeltacht

www.ahg.gov.ie

National Museum

www.museum.ie

Heritage Council

www.heritagecouncil.ie

Discovery Programme

www.discoveryprogramme.ie



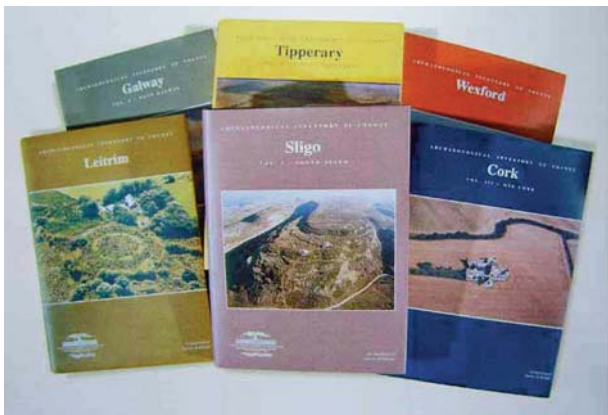
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- The section in the Department responsible for archaeological heritage is the National Monuments Service.



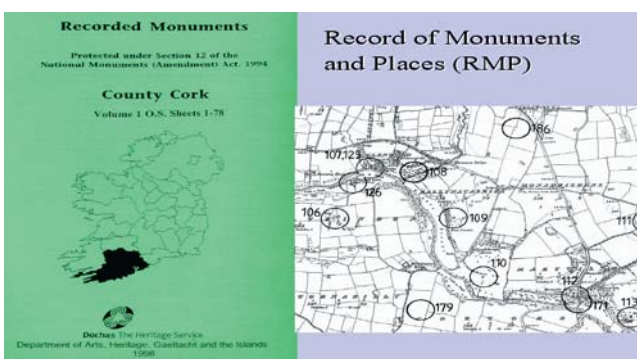
Archaeological Inventory

The **National Monuments Service** of the Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht, is divided into five units. These are

- The Archaeological Survey of Ireland.
- The Underwater Archaeology Unit.
- Planning and Licensing Unit.
- Protection of Monuments Unit.
- Conservation of National Monuments.
- Established in 1963, the main task of the **Archaeological Survey of Ireland** is to compile a base-line record of all archaeological monuments in the State.
- In total, there are approximately 125,000 records of monuments in the Survey's database. This database is known as the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). This information can now be consulted on the website www.archaeology.ie.

The Archaeological Survey of Ireland is also been responsible for the publication of the *Archaeological Inventory* series.

- The compilation of an inventory involves the inspection and description of all monuments in an area by field archaeologists.



The *National Monuments (Amendment) Act* of 1994 established the statutory **Record of Monuments and Places (RMP)**.

- The **RMP** for every county in the State was issued by the **Archaeological Survey of Ireland** between 1995 and 1998.
- This gives legal protection to all the monuments listed in the **RMP**. The **RMP** is the primary instrument for the protection archaeological monuments in the State.

The other main body with responsibility for Ireland's archaeological heritage is the National Museum of Ireland. Whilst the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht is responsible for monuments, the National Museum of Ireland is responsible for artefacts.