



Cottageology

IMOGEN BERTIN

Chairperson

Founded by Orla Fitzmaurice
in 2012

Final visit of the
CorkCott project last Saturday →

info@cottageology.com

087 2655261

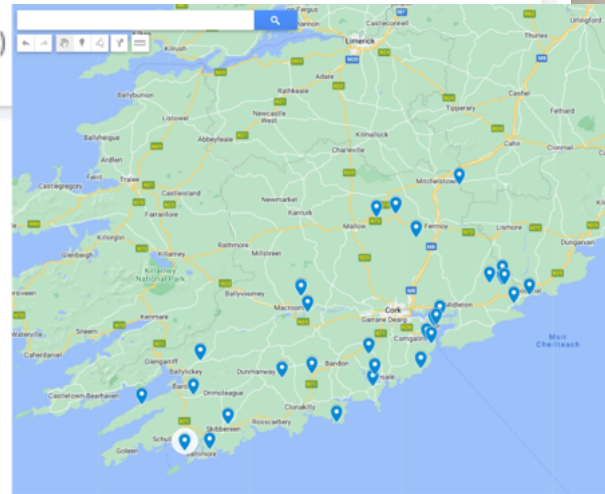


We collaborate about small, old Irish buildings to find out about, mind and bring them back into use



↑ About 8,000 a day use the group

CorkCott project volunteers distributed around the county →



↑ *Ink wash by Brian Nolan reproduced with permission*

WHAT IS COTTAGEOLOGY / WHO USES IT?

- Cottageology is a free facebook group
- You can join our **mailing list** to get useful documents for free
- There is a **knowledgebase** at cottageology.com
- Members can “**pay it forward**” – we have about **90 donors**
- Today’s **CorkCott Project** is funded by Cork County Council and the Heritage Council and **could not have happened without Mary Sleeman, Colin Humphreys, Conor Nelligan, Emma Baume, Elena Turk, Sarah Jane Halpin and THE PARTICIPANTS**



Cottageology



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council

Funded by
An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council

COTTAGEOLOGY CONSTITUTION

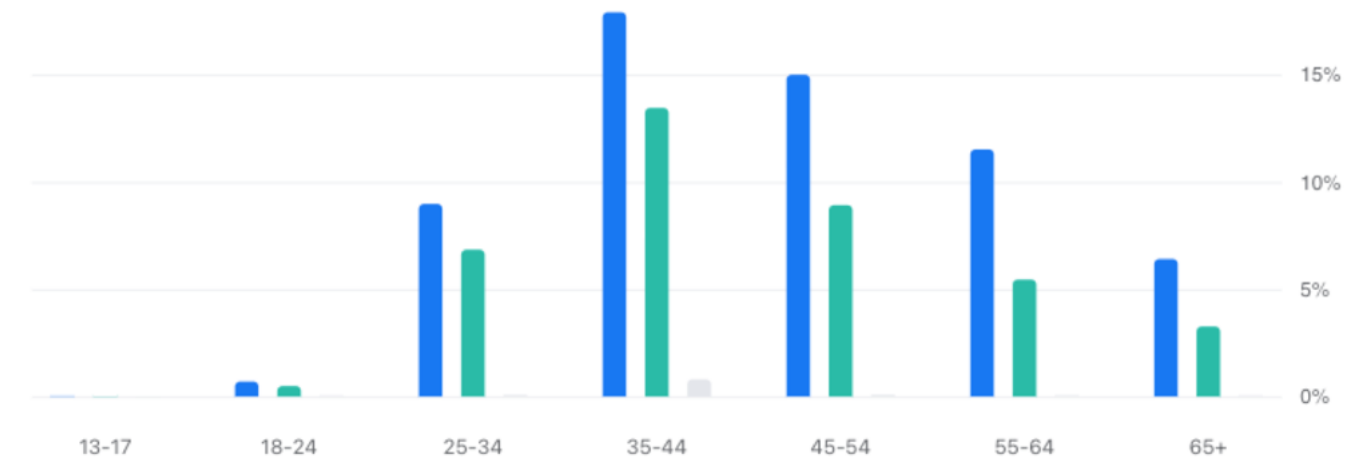
To provide advice on how to re-work, re-design and live in traditionally constructed buildings in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland with reference to:

- Collaborative sharing of knowledge and resources to **keep individual costs down**
- The principles of the *Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings*
- Aims of the Department of Housing's document "A Living Strategy" to enhance the understanding, minding and handing on of **Ireland's built vernacular heritage**
- Use of innovative, sustainable, evidence-based ecological building materials and solutions that take account of **biodiversity and energy efficiency** issues
- Working towards the creation of a network of "**Guardians**" of traditionally constructed buildings in Ireland, similar to the work of *Maisons Paysannes de France*.



Age and gender

61% Female 38% Male 1% Custom



Top countries

Ireland	20,388
United Kingdom	2,145
United States	1,314
Australia	344
Canada	127
Germany	70
United Arab Emirates	50
Spain	50
New Zealand	44
Netherlands	42

Top towns/cities

Dublin, Ireland	4,170
Cork, Ireland	662
Galway, Ireland	575
Limerick, Ireland	371
Ennis, Ireland	293
Kilkenny, Ireland	281
Carlow, Ireland	240
Athlone, Ireland	235
Wexford, Ireland	212
London	198



Cottageology

Private technical groups

The only good thing left on facebook?

“Cork people, if you don't send me details of the house you want to record within 24 hours, then this grant application is not happening...”

34 signed up for the CorkCott project within 48 hours

The hook:

“How old is my house?”

CORKCOTT PROJECT APPLICATION – FUNDING €2,250 – HOW OLD IS MY HOUSE?

Background

The current property shortage, along with the vacant and derelict property grants and the SEAI grants are helping to bring back traditionally constructed buildings into use, but also threatening many neglected survivors with forms of renovation that destroy all trace of their vernacular origins or their history in the land reforms of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These buildings need to be recorded, but not in the detail required for the register of protected structures.

New skills and technologies have made this process easier but it must be “expert fed” and at the same time involve the new inhabitants so that they are prepared to put in the extra time and expense involved in maintaining the traditionally constructed buildings that make Cork’s landscape attractive to visitors and residents alike.

Owners realise they are part of their building’s long history and can help that to continue after they sell or bequeath it



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council



Funded by
An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO ENGAGE COMMUNITY

Based on my practical experience of bringing back a derelict farmhouse with my husband Paul Adams, and experience of teaching adult education, and of working with online communities

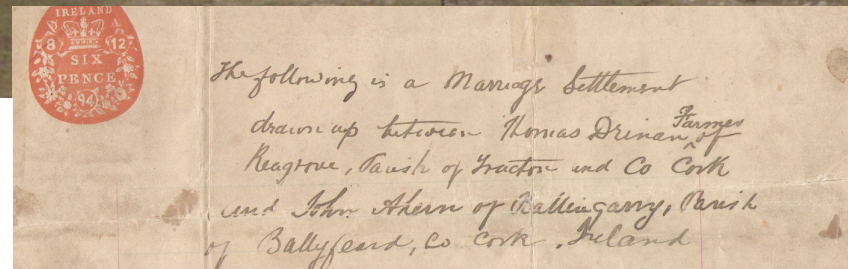


Cottageology



↓ Aspen trees shield the gate

1895 marriage settlement of house →



MULTI-DISCIPLINARY: COMPLICATED BUT ENGAGES...

Geography

Geology

Archaeology

History

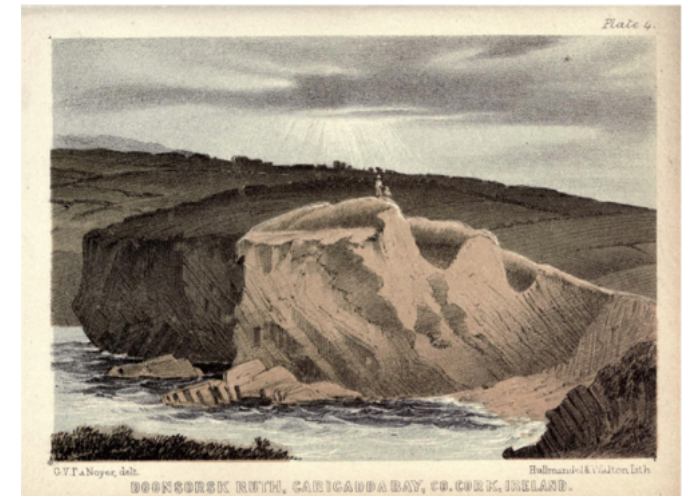
- Maps – changes in buildings and their surroundings and arrangement
- Censuses – changes in population, numbers in the house, Irish language, associated building uses
- Valuation – also the land associated if any, changes in ownership (cancellations)
- Photographs of people and places
- Oral history – asking friends, family, neighbours

Engineering

Biodiversity



Cottageology



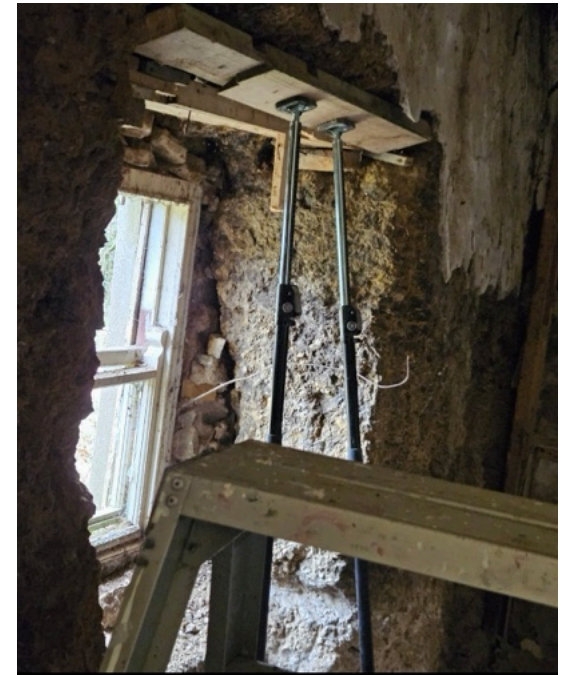
RECORDING: THE COMMON THREAD

1. A **simple way is needed** for busy people to record their old house history and we're trying to pilot that
2. Talking to people: **connect through oral history** and do your own recording – if you don't talk to those people they will be dead all too soon!
3. Keep track of what is happening with your house project with an **owner's passport** – might just be a file kept on the fridge?
 - Energy efficiency works – details of materials used must be kept for BER ratings and photographs of “hidden” works
 - Where did the money go?
 - How does all this new technology work?
Where do those cables from the new solar panels run exactly?

Different people have different reasons to record and become engaged, so that they mind their small, old, Irish building



Cottageology





Cottageology

WHAT DID 34 PEOPLE ACTUALLY DO WITH €2250 THEN?

1. Five activities that can be completed online (accessibility/time issues)
 - Historic maps
 - Why record/decide what you want to record?
 - Censuses
 - Valuation cancellation records – paid excellent Dublin genealogist Nicola Morris
 - Other written records – tithe applotments, Guy's directory, history of Parnell/Congested district/Local authority cottages

(Local Studies Unit & the C&C archives invaluable here again!)
2. Five group visits around the county to ten houses with archaeologists
3. Combined existing resources to provide a simple recording method
4. Publication to come – finds, feedback, advice people want in practice
5. **Most important: we've made a community!**



FINDS, NEXT STEPS – AND PROBLEMS

- Three cob and thatch buildings, only one on NIAH database – two owners put in contact with NBHS earth mortar and lime courses, and updates needed to NIAH record of the other
- Three tin roof/thatch ruins in Cork ID'd – not on public roads (so not on Barry's survey?)
- Civil/Independence war record being conserved and to be displayed at Fitzgerald Park
- Placenames recorded by UCD folklore project in 1937 now have their locations identified for Tracton parish to update Eámon Lankford's database
- Feedback from participants still to be collected, then a free online publication
- Archiving problem identified – how and where to store this stuff digitally?
- I hadn't enough Irish language knowledge for some elements
- Common advice problems (SEAI/old buildings/floor replacements/ insulated lime/clearing your acre without destroying remnants or wildlife/ funding)
- What is "vernacular" for funding? Why does Cork get same €s as Leitrim? Is making that definition too tight as damaging and difficult as too loose?
- We will try do some more detailed recording (IF WE CAN) voluntarily



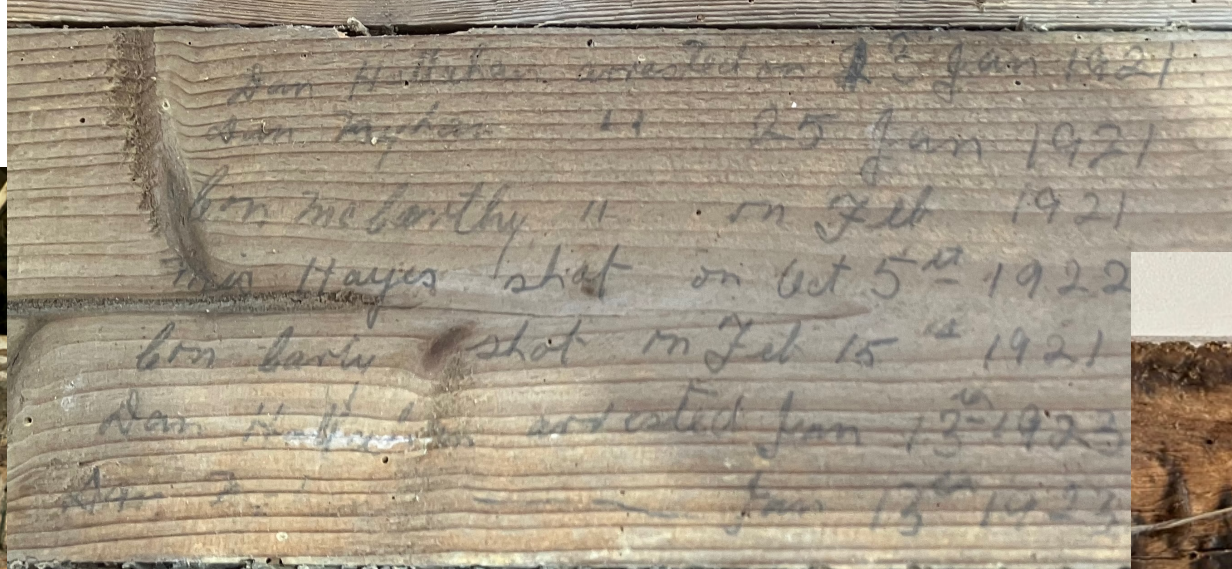
Cottageology



QUESTIONS?



Cottageology



But first
meet
Colin Humphreys if he's here?
About fireplace lintel burn marks...



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council



Funded by
An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council