

# WONDER WANDER PHIBSBOROUGH



NATIONAL INVENTORY of ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

Comhairle Cathrach Bhaite Átha Cliath Dublin City Council

## INSTRUCTIONS

### TAKE A 'WONDER WANDER' THROUGH PHIBSBOROUGH:

- Wander through our streets, find the picture clues and delve into the stories that our city tells through its rich architectural heritage.
- Take ten minutes to spot the features in our scavenger hunt, or simply relax and enjoy our carefully curated self-guided tour of Phibsborough.
- Always remember to glance up, peer down, and never cease to WONDER!

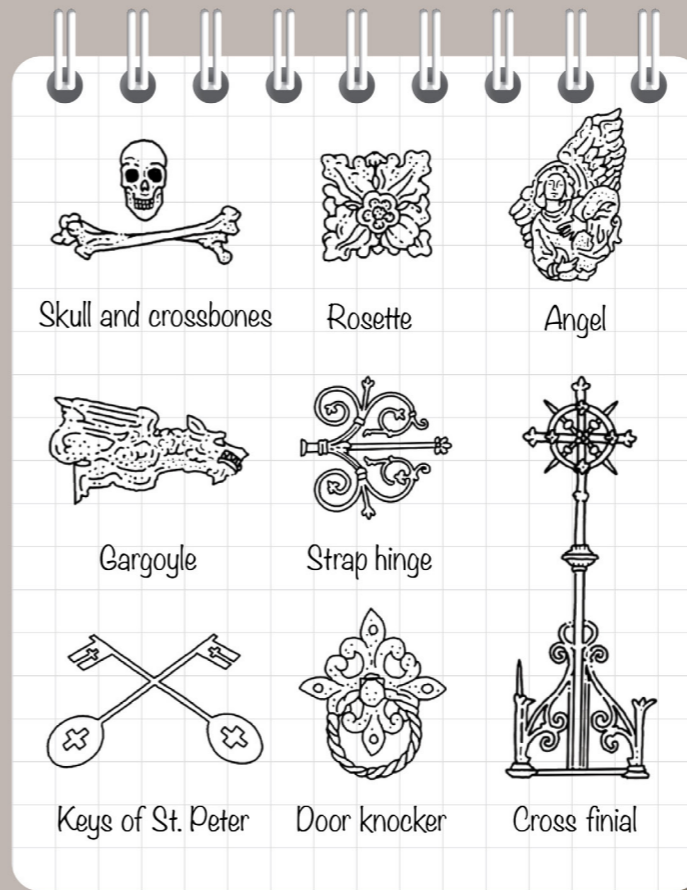


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## SCAVENGER HUNT

HOW MANY OF THESE FEATURES CAN YOU SPOT BENEATH THE SPIRE OF ST PETER'S CHURCH?



## THE STORY OF PHIBSBOROUGH

Phibsborough or Phibsboro developed along the newly laid out North Circular Road in the late 1700s. The area was linked by a spur to the Royal Canal in 1801, and this brought commercial and residential expansion. In the 1840s construction of the Midlands and Great Western Railway confirmed its status as a transport hub linking road, water and rail.

By the late 19th century Phibsborough was a thriving suburb of the city. Doyle's Corner developed as the commercial centre with fine banks, public houses and retail premises. To the west, St Peter's Church was enlarged during the period, its landmark spire only added in the early 1900s. The arrival of the tram encouraged further growth and red brick terraces were built for the commuting middle classes. In the early 20th century Dalymount Park

became the home of Bohemian Football Club, bringing the roar of the crowd, the rhythm of music, and the buzz of match day to the area.

Today, Phibsborough is an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). This designation recognises its special architectural, social and historic character and supports the protection and enhancement of the built heritage. Alongside the committed efforts of local residents and community groups, the ACA helps to ensure that the unique character of this much loved part of the city is valued, enjoyed, and passed on to future generations.

**Want to learn more about Phibsborough Architectural Conservation Area and other Architectural Conservation Areas in the city? Contact the Conservation Office of Dublin City Council.**



With special thanks to the local community for their assistance in developing the trail.

## TICK THE BOX AS YOU WONDER

### 1. PHIBSBOROUGH LIBRARY

One of four libraries designed during the 1930s by Dublin Corporation architect, Robert Sorely Lawrie. You might know his other branches at Drumcondra, Inchicore and Ringsend. The large metal-framed windows and expansive internal daylight flood the reading room with natural light.



On the corner, east of the library and tucked behind shrubs, is the former Blaquiery Bridge National School. Established in the early 1800s this school remained open well into the 20th century.

### 2. BLAQUIERE BRIDGE

Would you realise that you're now standing on the site of a bridge? Built in the 1790s and named after a director of the Royal Canal Company, the bridge carried North Circular Road over a spur of the Royal Canal. For over a century, barges passed below, on their way to and from the harbour at Broadstone. By the early 20th century canal traffic had reduced and by 1930 the line had been filled in. The outline of the spur survives, now reimagined as a linear park.



You may also have spotted the two granite markers with cast-iron plaques either side of the former bridge. These are ward markers, once used to indicate electoral districts.

The statue of a kneeling soldier commemorates members of the Dublin Brigade of the Irish Volunteers, who fought and died in the Easter Rising and the War of Independence. It was sculpted by Dublin born Leo Broe, who was a member of the Volunteers. It originally incorporated a drinking fountain at its base.



### 3. FORMER MUNSTER AND LEINSTER BANK

Take a close look at this former bank, designed by architects McDonnell & Dixon in the early 20th century. The M&L monogram appears in several places. Can you also spot the carved crests that symbolise the two provinces in the bank's name? The three crowns are for Munster and the harp is for Leinster.



### 4. PHIBSBOROUGH ROAD SHOPFRONTS

Confectioners, chandlers, drapers - many businesses were listed here in the late 19th century! Look out for the ornate timber console brackets that survive at No.61 and No.63. Traditional shopfronts often featured elaborately carved brackets that were used to frame the shop name and make it more eye-catching.

As you turn the corner back onto North Circular Road, look out for the memorial plaque to Sean Healy. Born in Phibsborough, this plaque marks the spot where he was killed during Easter of 1916. Healy was the youngest casualty on the Republican side.

### 5. COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

This terrace of mainly single-storey shops marks a radical change in the early 20th century streetscape. New commercial units were built in the front gardens of existing domestic properties, meeting the needs of the growing local population. Can you spot the two identical plaques inscribed "Commercial Buildings", at either end of the terrace?

On your way to our next stop you'll pass an alleyway leading to Phibsborough Avenue, blink and you'll miss it! There is a red brick house at its far end, locally said to be the oldest house in Phibsborough.

### 6. FORMER BAPTIST CHAPEL

Known as the Red Church, this distinctive former Baptist Chapel is a reminder of the growth of nonconformist congregations during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Look at the decorative carvings around the doorways, can you spot the reference to Hugh Latimer, a 16th century Reformation preacher?



### 7. GEORGIAN HOUSES

This near identical pair represents the evolution of the grand Georgian townhouse to a more economical early 19th century suburban scale. The design continues to rely on classical proportions and the ordered placement of windows and doors. Note their delicate fanlights, these are shallow in depth to accommodate the lower floor-to-ceiling heights of the more compact houses. Much of the building materials were still handmade at the time, including the brickwork, which displays subtle variations in colour and texture.

### 8. NORTH CIRCULAR ROAD

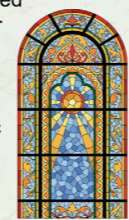
North Circular Road was laid out in the late 18th century as part of Dublin's grand ring of boulevards. It has been a stage for every kind of

city life: cattle once thundered along it on their way from the market at Prussia Street to Dublin Port; rebels marched down it during 1916; and football fans still pour through on match days as they make their way to Dalymount Park. Along its length are houses, churches, pubs, hospitals and even a prison.



### 9. HARRY CLARKE STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

Set on an eye-catching site at the fork in the road, the church of St Peter's dates to the second half of the 19th century. Its richly decorated interior includes two commissions by Dublin's most celebrated stained glass designer Harry Clarke. The windows in the Mortuary Chapel were created from a mosaic of smaller offcuts, pieced together by his workshop into a kaleidoscope of rich colour and intricate detail. Can you find the second set of windows by Clarke?



As you leave, pause beneath the soaring 60m spire, a landmark in the surrounding area since the early 1900s. Take ten minutes to discover the wealth of details in our Scavenger Hunt.

### 10. DALYMOUNT TERRACE

Dalymount Terrace looks very different to the pair of early 19th century houses on North Circular Road. It showcases the changing tastes in domestic design in the late 19th century. The roofs are no longer hidden behind parapet walls, the canted-bay windows add variety, and decorative detail has increased. Note the machine-made red brick and decorative terracotta replacing the hand-made brick of earlier decades.



### 11. MEWS BUILDING

Tucked to the rear of No.1 Dalymount Terrace is a mews building for the stabling of horses, a precursor to the modern day garage! With the arrival of the tram network, the need for stables associated with houses disappeared. Take note of the decorative features lavished on the elevation that can be seen from the house. Compare this with the side and rear, what do you notice?

At the end of the laneway is Dalymount Park. 'Bohs' have played here since 1901, when they moved from the Phoenix Park. Long known as the "Home of Irish Football" Dalymount has hosted countless matches, Pelé played here in 1972, as well as concerts, from Black Sabbath to Bob Marley.



Match days still see crowds streaming past, with pubs and shops buzzing, as they have done for generations.

### 12. SITE OF FORMER TRAMWAY DEPOT

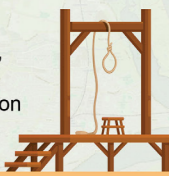
This brick pier is a subtle reminder of a time when the area was a hub for the city's tram network. Built in the 1870s as part of the Cabra Depot for the North Dublin Street Tramways Company, by the turn of the century it had expanded to become one of the largest in Dublin. For decades, the area echoed with the hum and rattle of trams until the depot closed in the 1940s.



### 13. DOYLE'S CORNER

Doyle's Corner is one of the many Dublin junctions named by popular usage rather than officialdom. For years it was known as Dunphy's Corner, and was a landmark on funeral routes to Glasnevin. It became so well-known that 'Rounding Dunphy's Corner' developed into a local euphemism for life's last journey. By the early 1900s John Doyle had established a grocer's and wine merchant's at No.66, and the name gradually followed. Look up! Can you see his monogram?

The pub on the opposite corner at No.160 is said to have been a favoured drinking spot of Albert Pierrepoint, who worked the gallows in nearby Mountjoy Prison. One of the 20th century's most prolific executioners, Pierrepoint presided over the last execution to be held at Mountjoy in 1954.



Look up for the green bilingual street signage in Cló Gaelach. This ornate Gaelic script first appeared in the early 1900s as part of the revival of Irish language and heritage.

### 14. BRICK TERRACE

This late 19th century commercial terrace is characterised by colourful brickwork and terracotta details typical of the period. The granite façade at the centre was inserted during the early 1930s by the National Bank to signal solidity and to create a strong presence in the neighbourhood.

Before finishing the trail, look out for the granite steps at the side of the library. These are said to have provided access to the Royal Canal towpath and are a quiet reminder of a time when Phibsborough was at the centre of one of Ireland's busiest transport hubs.

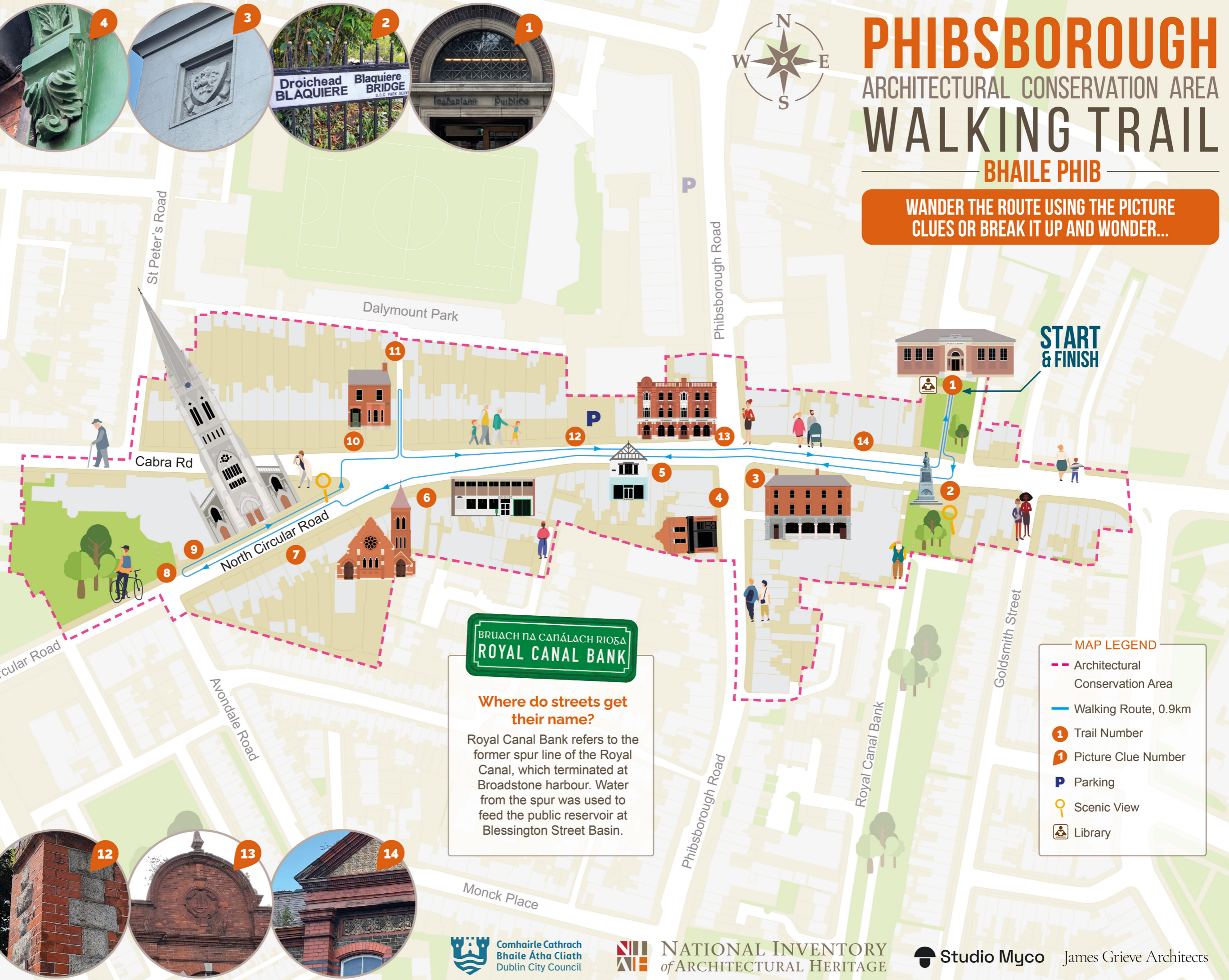
# PHIBSBOROUGH

## ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

# WALKING TRAIL

BHAILE PHIB

WANDER THE ROUTE USING THE PICTURE CLUES OR BREAK IT UP AND WONDER...



**BRUACH NA CANÁLACH RÍOISIA**  
**ROYAL CANAL BANK**

**Where do streets get their name?**

Royal Canal Bank refers to the former spur line of the Royal Canal, which terminated at Broadstone harbour. Water from the spur was used to feed the public reservoir at Blessington Street Basin.

- MAP LEGEND**
- Architectural Conservation Area
  - Walking Route, 0.9km
  - 1 Trail Number
  - 1 Picture Clue Number
  - P** Parking
  - Scenic View
  - Library