

## Heritage Case Study – John Beattie

CITB-ConstructionSkills in NI secured funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund through its Skills for the Future Programme to develop traditional skills in the local built heritage sector. John Beattie from Co Tyrone has been involved in the Sustaining Traditional Building Skills in NI project working primarily on thatching, in particular the repair and maintenance of thatched roofs in the Ulster American Folk Park and Ulster Folk and Transport Museum.

John grew up on a farm on the outskirts of Omagh and studied Ancient History and Archaeology at Queens University before working on the conservation of historic structures with Carrig Conversation. Speaking about his experience working on the project John said, “I have always been passionate about built heritage and in particular the survival of traditional building skills. It was a pleasure to be part of this project where I had the opportunity to use ‘stitch-in-time’ thatching techniques on key buildings at the Ulster American Folk Park. Given that there are only a small number of working thatchers, I am proud to help sustain this skill for the future.”



“I have learnt a lot throughout the course of the programme but in particular I have learnt the importance of good preparation. It is important to prepare your scollops and comb the straw in the depths

of winter so that you can make the most of the dry bright weather in the spring and summer.”

Throughout the project John gained NVQ Level 3 in Roofing Occupations (Construction)-Thatching.

John hopes to use the knowledge and experience gained to continue working within the traditional heritage sector and has already secured a contract to thatch a turf stack.

For further information on the Sustaining Traditional Building Skills in NI project and other built heritage work that CITB-ConstructionSkills NI are involved in log on to [www.citbsni.org.uk/heritage](http://www.citbsni.org.uk/heritage)