



SOVRINTENDENZA
TAL-PATRIMONJU KULTURALI
SUPERINTENDENCE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

2022

Annual Report

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Foreword

Overview of 2022



2022 saw the world return to a post Covid-19 normality after two years. Consequently, with staff returning to the offices on a daily basis the need for an office refurbishment was evident more than ever and had to be prioritised. In the process a reorganisation of office spaces was also carried out to ensure space maximisation and also better reflect employees' seating according to teams and functionality for best performance efficiency. In parallel to such renovations, a much needed organigram reform within the entity also took place following the progression of seven Executive Officers to Senior Executive Officers, through a dedicated successful internal call for applications process, and whereby each senior officer was assigned a team of two to four personnel with specific tasks and duties. This restructuring was essential so as to relieve pressures from middle and top management whilst regrettably, with the exception of one person joining on loan from the RSSL scheme, no new recruits were engaged during the year.

The refurbishment works, as well as the restructuring itself, also allowed the entity to have a small team of employees to start a much-needed pilot project on the

reorganisation of its archives, both physical and digital. This project, which will continue through 2023 will see the weeding and sorting of documentation to improve archival research.

Towards the third quarter of the year, the Superintendence launched a new website, a much-needed upgrade from the previous version. Whilst featuring updated information with regards to the functions and duties of the entity, as well as an improved public interface, the main feature of the portal is the GIS interface. The latter shows the cultural heritage features forming part of the National Inventory, as well as newly discovered archaeological sites and remains. This has boosted interest and incentive towards the protection of cultural heritage as it allows researchers, cultural heritage professionals, and the general public, to identify easily whether cultural heritage features are present at any location in the Maltese Islands at a click of a button.

At the end of the year, the Superintendence lead and participated in the first ever seminar for the National Research Agenda for Cultural Heritage, which boasted the

attendance of around 80 cultural heritage professionals and scholars. Results from the seminar will be published in 2023. At the same time, the entity also embarked on an extended outreach programme, starting off by the participation in a number of freshers' week events and careers' days, which saw a good number of staff from different teams and educational background within the Superintendence exchanging their personal experience in the entity with prospective students.

Another landmark achievement of the entity was the establishment of a Non-Governmental Organisation register, which currently features around 30 organisations. As a legal obligation of the entity, this

register features NGOs whose aim and function is to promote cultural heritage, as well as manage cultural heritage assets.

Next year will mark the 20th year anniversary since the establishment of the entity, after the dissolution of the Museums Department and the formation of the Superintendence as national regulator of cultural heritage. It is the intention of the management to commemorate this milestone through a dedicated publication and other events. Hopefully this milestone will also mark a much-needed increase in human resources to allow the entity to continue carrying out its functions diligently and professionally.

March 2023

Kurt Farrugia
Superintendent of
Cultural Heritage

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Services

1. Archaeology and Research

Introduction

Year on year, the Superintendence constantly invested in infrastructure and human resources to further improve its operations. During 2022, the appointment of a number of senior executives permitted an improved organizational structure, whereby now every team within the National Inventory, Archaeology and Research Unit (NIARU) is headed by a Senior Executive. This has led to an increased efficiency across the board in the various functions carried out by the Unit.

An important aspect of the Unit is Research, and in 2022, the Unit was heavily involved in this aspect. In collaboration with Mr. Joseph Magro Conti, advisor within MHAL, and Prof. JoAnn Cassar, on behalf of the Conservation and Built Heritage, Faculty for the Built Environment at the University of Malta, the Unit embarked on a project aimed at establishing a National Research Agenda for Cultural Heritage.

Archaeology Investigation Team

The main remit of the Archaeology Investigation Team is to focus on research-led archaeological investigations. However, as a result of the lack of human resources as well as the intensity of development across the Islands, the major archaeological interventions in which the team is involved result from development works. During such interventions, the Team provides specialized assistance, carries out research-based investigations, prepares materials for study at post-excavation, studies and interprets the data and finds gathered from recent and older excavations, and

publishes discoveries and the studies made. For this reason, the Archaeology Investigation Team also assists researchers such as students using material and data from excavations found at the Superintendence. The team also collaborates with other entities which carry out archaeological investigations during fieldwork and post-excavation. Since one of the fundamental aims of archaeology is to educate the public on new discoveries and research, the Archaeology Investigation Team engages also in public outreach activities.

Major Archaeological Investigations and Post-Excavation Work

Best practice in archaeology requires the timely publication of archaeological discoveries. Keeping this in mind, the strategy for 2022 as well as for the following year, was aimed at less fieldwork and more post excavation work. The Team has thus embarked on a smaller number of archaeological investigations and

concentrated more on post excavation work to be in a better position to publish archaeological investigations carried out in the previous years. Notwithstanding, the team still carried out archaeological interventions on site and collaborated on fieldwork projects and post-excavation projects with other institutions.

Table 1: The major archaeological projects carried out by the Superintendence in 2022

Site	Locality	Type of Intervention
Xaghra Circle – prehistoric underground cemetery	Xaghra, Gozo	Excavation and post-excavation
Roman Domus	Rabat, Malta	Excavation and post-excavation
Il-Marnisi – Roman villa	Marsaxlokk	Excavation and post-excavation

Site	Locality	Type of Intervention
Magħtab fields	Magħtab	Fieldwalking and post-excavation
Latnija Cave	Mellieħa	Excavation
Punic tomb	Mosta	Excavation and post-excavation
Water Gallery Shaft	Triq Ġħajn Qajjet, Rabat, Malta	Excavation
Bronze Age deposit in a silo pit	Rabat, Malta	Excavation and post-excavation
Phoenician tombs from Ġħajn Klieb and Ġħajn Qajjet	Rabat, Malta	Post-excavation
Tarxien Punic and Roman Necropolis	Triq Montebello, Tarxien	Post-excavation
Roman tomb	Triq Kola Xara, Rabat	Post-excavation
Punic tomb	Gudja	Post-excavation
Punic tomb	Ġħaxaq	Post-excavation

Collaboration with Other Entities

Xagħra Circle Excavation, Gozo

Heritage Malta carried out another season of fieldwork at the Xagħra Circle in April 2022. This consisted of the documentation and excavation of human remains in an area which is currently being assessed for long-term conservation procedures. The extracted remains required also cleaning and assessment. During the 2022 fieldwork, three osteologists from the Superintendence assisted in these works together with the Heritage Malta team.

Roman Domus Excavation, Rabat, Malta

As part of a long-term project for the Roman Domus in Rabat, Heritage Malta obtained consent from the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage to carry out excavations as part of the joint research project *Melite Civitas Romana*. The main aim of the project is to better understand this site and its context so as to be in a better position to properly manage this site. During the first season of excavation in 2022, several exploratory

trenches were opened in key areas of the site. These allowed the identification of both previously recorded and unrecorded features, which gave new insights on the site after the very first explorations in the late 19th and early 20th century. The Superintendence of Cultural Heritage assisted the Heritage Malta in supervising the investigation of the area situated in front of the Domus main entrance, as part of the collaboration between the two entities. The area was particularly interesting since a large part of an Islamic and Norman cemetery was identified by Sir Themistocles Zammit in the early 1900s. The *Melite Civitas Romana* project, which saw the participation of volunteers actively engaged in the excavation and post-excavation process, will continue in the coming years.

Il-Marnisi, Marsaxlokk, Malta

As in 2021, the excavations of the remains of a Roman rural establishment in Marsaxlokk continued in the Summer of 2022. The significant remains were



Excavation in one of the areas at Il-Marnisi in Marsaxlokk in Summer 2022. PHOTO: SCH



The site of Il-Marnisi in Marsaxlokk during Summer 2022. PHOTO: SCH

first identified in 2020, and the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage and the Department of Classics and Archaeology from the University of Malta, embarked on a collaborative project which sees the site being used as part of the annual training fieldwork for undergraduates studying archaeology at the University of Malta. In 2022, the Superintendence – which is one of the site directors – also actively supervised the excavation on site as part of the joint project. The investigation continued to provide important data on the layout and functioning

of a Roman agricultural production site, as initially evidenced by the two limestone counterweight blocks discovered, which formed part of two olive oil presses. The investigation of the rustic villa gave crucial data on its life span between the Late Punic to Roman period and beyond. During 2022, the site required collaboration across teams at the Superintendence to plan the upcoming excavations and the further development works required for the project. The Superintendence and the dedicated team will further engage with the preservation of the remains on site including those collected in

the laboratory with conservation measures being applied. The investigations with the University of Malta will continue into 2023 and they are fully supported by the site owner. This site is a very clear example of how development led archaeology can lead to very important discoveries which are investigated through research led processes.

Latnija Cave, Mellieħa

Towards the end of 2022, the Superintendence once again took part in a project led by the Max Planck Institute for Geoanthropology together with University of Malta. The project, which started in 2019, consisted of an archaeological excavation at Latnija Cave in Mellieħa, with the aim to investigate any possible evidence of human settlement in this area. The Superintendence assisted specialists and archaeologists from the Max Planck Institute and the University of Malta in both on-site excavation and post-excavation work of material collected from the site. The project is still ongoing and publication of preliminary results by the involved entities is planned.

Development-Led Investigations

Magħtab Fieldwalking

Field walking in several fields near the Ecohive Waste Management plant in Magħtab was carried out in August 2022 by a large Superintendence team. During this exercise, pottery was identified and collected, and cultural heritage features in the landscape were identified and documented for a better assessment of the landscape. The project was carried out to inform better the Superintendence on the cultural value of this landscape so as to inform future development plans and guide the monitoring procedures required for the archaeological assessment of the site.



Fieldwalking in fields at Magħtab in Summer 2022. PHOTO: SCH

Punic tomb at Triq il-Fortizza, Mosta

In mid-2022, a team of archaeologists from the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, together with the freelance archaeologist who was monitoring this site, carried out an archaeological excavation of a Punic tomb in Mosta. The tomb consisted of a roughly hewn out rectangular shaft leading to an oval chamber measuring approximately 2.00m by 1.55m. The chamber entrance was found blocked with a sealing slab. Once the slab was documented and removed, the chamber revealed a group of at least six skeletons (adults and children) laid side by side surrounded by around 12 pottery vessels (grave goods) datable to the Punic period. These vessels included two amphorae, four jugs, five plates or bowls, and an oil lamp. Among the remains, were also two urns containing cremated

human bones indicating that probably at least a seventh and eighth person were buried in this tomb following a different burial ritual from the already mentioned inhumations. Further cremated human bones were also found among the six skeletons. The number of remains and the different burial practices show an extensive use of the tomb across several years or generations. The post-excavation processes for this tomb has commenced with the preliminary cleaning of the objects and will see the work continue in the coming months with the full analysis of all the remains leading up to publication.



Excavation at Triq il-Fortizza, Mosta in September 2022. PHOTO: SCH



Post-excavation of the Bronze Age material from Rabat in the Superintendence laboratory in December 2022. PHOTO: SCH

Bronze Age deposit in Rabat, Malta

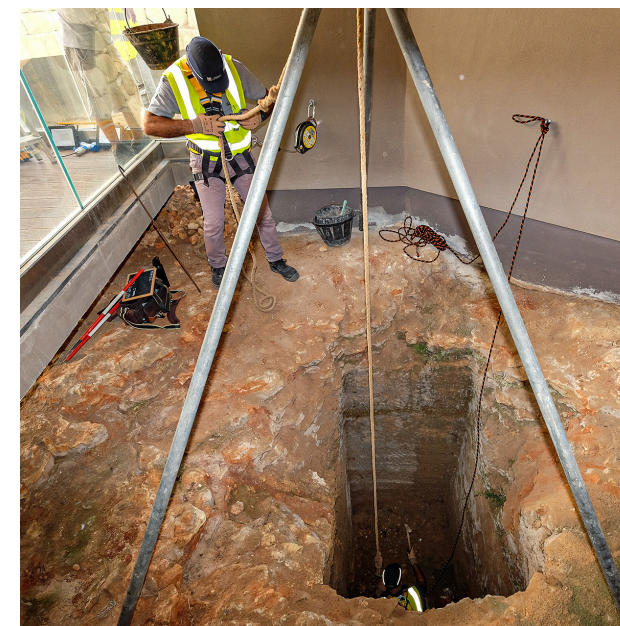
In late 2022, during the monitored investigation of a plot for development, a rock-cut feature was unearthed. During the investigation of this feature, it transpired

that this was a truncated silo-pit containing extensive pottery fragments datable to the Bronze Age period. The investigation revealed that the pottery fragments had been dumped in this pit probably during the end of the Bronze Age. The post-excavation has already commenced and will continue in 2023. The work on the pottery fragments entails laborious work to ensure no

Research-Led Investigations

Excavation at the Għajn National Water Conservation Centre, Triq Għajn Qajjet, Rabat, Malta

In October 2022, as part of European Heritage Days, the Superintendence continued for the second year with the excavation of a deep rectangular shaft found in the Għajn National Water Conservation Centre in Rabat. This feature had been discovered during the construction of the same center in 2015 but was never investigated in depth. Contrary to its original identification as a tomb shaft, from other comparative features discovered in Rabat, the archaeology investigation team is interpreting this feature as a probable medieval water gallery shaft forming part of a larger system of galleries created to supply the area with a perennial water source. The bottom of this shaft has not been reached, but a number of pottery fragments has been found and collected, and will be studied during post-excavation in the coming months.



Excavation at of the shaft at the Għajn Water Centre in October 2022. PHOTO: SCH

damage is caused to the delicate pottery fragments, some of which including impressive decorative impression on them. This work is being carried out by Superintendence officers, with the assistance of the archaeology monitor who was surveilling the site during development, in the Superintendence Laboratory to ensure a controlled environment.

Phoenician tombs from Għajn Klieb and Għajn Qajjet, Rabat, Malta

Following the re-discovery and scientific investigation of the Phoenician tomb with a stone sarcophagus at Għajn Klieb, which was carried out by the Superintendence in collaboration with Heritage Malta and the University of Malta in 2021, extensive post-excavation work began for this project. The post-excavation project includes the processing of over 80 objects collected from the sarcophagus tomb, as well as two other nearby tombs discovered and excavated in 2016 along Triq Għajn Qajjet, and which also date to the Phoenician Period.



Conservation process on a number of objects from Għajn Klieb and Għajn Qajjet tombs carried out in the Superintendence laboratory in 2022. PHOTO: SCH



Conservation process on a number of objects from Għajn Klieb and Għajn Qajjet tombs carried out in the Superintendence laboratory in 2022. PHOTO: SCH

The post-excavation work by conservators and archaeologists, began extensively at the Superintendence laboratory in 2022, for the cleaning and consolidation of pottery vessels and the human remains. The cleaning of compacted material from inside large pottery vessels derived from one of the tombs along Triq Ġħajn Qajjet, revealed the presence of cremated human remains and a number of smaller items identified as personal ornaments such as rings and bangles. The metal objects from all three tombs were cleaned and conserved by Heritage Malta's conservators at their laboratories in Bighi. In the course of 2022, other post-excavation work ensued, ranging from the processing of documentation material from the 2016 and 2021 excavations, to the recording of objects by illustration, photography, and scanning in conjunction with the collaborators on this project.



Documentation in the Superintendence laboratory in December 2022. PHOTO: SCH

As part of this collaborative project, in August 2022, a temporary exhibition entitled 'Meet the Phoenicians of Malta' was also set up and launched at the Museum of Archaeology, which displayed a selection of the objects and human remains found in the three tombs, the sarcophagus itself, and information panels on the discovery and studies carried out so far. The information gathered in 2022, also led to the preparation of visuals and data for a presentation given during the 10th International Congress of Phoenician and Punic Studies held in Eivissa/Ibiza in October 2022, putting the discoveries made on an international sphere. Work on this project will continue in 2023 with further processing of the materials and data, which will lead to a major publication in 2024 focused on the three Phoenician tombs excavated in 2016 and 2021.

Tarxien Punic and Roman Necropolis

Following the archaeological investigation of a cluster of tombs between 2018 and 2020 (Annual Report 2020: 196), the post-excavation of the remains collected, and the data gathered, commenced extensively in the



The exhibition 'Meet the Phoenicians of Malta' during its launch in August 2022; some of the Superintendence officers who contributed to the field excavations and exhibition. PHOTO: SCH



The exhibition 'Meet the Phoenicians of Malta' during its launch in August 2022; some of the Superintendence officers who contributed to the field excavations and exhibition. PHOTO: SCH



Analysis of the pottery vessels from the Tarxien necropolis at the Superintendence laboratory in 2022. PHOTO: SCH

fourth quarter of 2022, and will continue in 2023 leading to a publication. The post-excavation mainly includes the processing and study of pottery vessels and human remains. The latter vary from inhumated remains to cremated remains. One of the aims of this project, is to identify changing trends in funerary rituals during Punic and Roman times in this area of Malta, as well as outline a catalogue of the remains to offer comparisons with other sites locally.

Post-Excavation of Other Sites

Extensive post-excavation works were carried out and concluded for three funerary sites discovered and excavated between 2018 and 2020: the Punic tomb at Tal-Barrani, Ġħaxaq (Annual Report 2020: 200), the Punic tomb at Ta' Lampat, Gudja (Annual Report 2020: 199), and the Roman funerary site of Triq Kola Xara, Rabat, Malta (Annual Report 2020: 193-195). The post-excavation includes the cataloguing, documentation,



Analysis of the pottery vessels from the Tarxien necropolis at the Superintendence laboratory in 2022. PHOTO: SCH

and interpretation of the pottery vessels and other objects, as well as the inventory, osteological study, and interpretation of the human remains. Apart from the remains, the documentation gathered from these sites was finalized and added to the archival material available at the Superintendence.

The National Research Agenda for Cultural Heritage (NARCH)

The 2002 Cultural Heritage Act provided for the Ministry responsible for cultural heritage, to prepare a **National Strategy for Cultural Heritage**, which was approved and published in 2006. One of the outcomes of the Strategy was the formulation of a National Research Agenda for Cultural Heritage (NARCH).

In 2010 the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage issued a *Discussion Document* about the NARCH in consultation with other entities. In 2019, the initiative was once again taken up by the Superintendence in tandem with the E-RIHS initiative led by the University of Malta, and rallied other heritage related state entities, the University, as well as the Church to collaborate in forming a NARCH.

The purpose of the NARCH is "to promote high quality and innovative scientific research in cultural heritage issues, to advance knowledge, improve the mapping of cultural heritage assets and their conservation and protection requirements, the facilitation to greater access to archives and databases and to support the created of innovative experience and heritage services" (SCH Discussion Document, 2010).

The Superintendence of Cultural Heritage with the help of the Office of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry for The National Heritage, The Arts and Local Government (MHAL), and the assistance of Prof. JoAnn Cassar from the University of Malta, organized the First NARCH Seminar on 1st December 2022 in the Valletta Design Cluster to disseminate the main findings to participants in the survey.

More than 80 participants from various professions and entities that work and carry out research on Heritage in Malta attended. Short speeches were made on the Findings from the Survey carried out in the first half of 2022. The speakers also gave a short explanation to the media that was broadcasted and uploaded on social media.

The Seminar included two workshop sessions, six which were specialisation focus groups held in the morning (archaeology, art history, built/urban heritage and restoration, archives/history/ancient languages, anthropology/cultural heritage management, objects restoration/heritage sciences), and another six with interdisciplinary participants held in the afternoon.



NARCH Seminar held in December 2022. PHOTO: SCH

Each group had a moderator and a rapporteur chosen amongst those attending and who were briefed about

Publications

Two separate publications for three sites were drafted and finalised in 2022; one features the Roman funerary site of Triq Kola Xara, Rabat, Malta (Annual Report 2020: 193-195); the second incorporates two sites including the Punic tomb at Tal-Barrani, Għaxaq (Annual Report 2020: 200) and the Punic tomb at Ta' Lampat, Gudja (Annual Report 2020: 199). Both have been submitted for publication in October 2022 and are currently awaiting review feedback from the publisher. These publications are expected to be available to the public in 2023.

their roles a few days before the event. After each workshop session, the 12 rapporteurs shared the outcomes from their groups with those attending. Question time and the rapporteur sessions were led by the Chief Moderator for the day. Attendees had also the opportunity to network during the breaks. Those present expressed satisfaction and showed the desire to have more of these activities as these provide opportunities for discussion, collaboration, and interdisciplinary work.

The Superintendence intends to take this project further in the coming years. In fact, it is already planning the follow-up with the coordinators and stakeholders for 2023 and possibly those for the following years. NARCH supports the goals of the E-RIHS project as reported below.

In 2022, the Archaeology Investigation Team also contributed an article to a book entitled *Storja u Kultura Haż-Żabbar 2022* (volume 12) by M. Schembri (ed.). The article entitled 'Qabar Puniku ġo Haż-Żabbar' described the Punic tomb excavated by the Superintendence in 2021 on the outskirts of Żabbar (Annual Report 2021: 16).

The Archaeology Investigation Team also contributed to the dissemination of archaeological discoveries and

research being carried out by the Superintendence in a number of public events. In May 2022, a seminar was organised for the members of the Malta Archaeological Society and the public. This seminar included the presentation of three lectures; one presented the work that is carried out by the National Inventory, Research and Archaeology Unit; the second presented the archaeological excavations carried out by the Superintendence throughout period 2019 to 2021; and the third presented two Punic-Roman sites from Rabat which had been recently excavated by the Superintendence.

In September 2022, the restoration work carried out on the church dedicated to Our Lady of Mercy in Gudja was inaugurated. The Archaeology Investigation team and other Superintendence officers, including archaeologists and conservators, had contributed to

the archaeological investigations and conservation works at this chapel in previous months, assisting the Restoration Directorate. During the inauguration, the Superintendence gave a brief presentation of the work that was carried out to the participants.

Throughout 2022, the Archaeology Investigation Team assisted six students with their university dissertation research in archaeology, since they were using archaeological materials and documentation housed at the Superintendence. Other students were also assisted during their work in university study units for the masters' courses, whereby they were required to study archaeological materials from recently excavated sites. The courses included undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral degrees in archaeology with the University of Malta and foreign universities.

Continuous Professional Development

Workshop: Conservation Practices in Archaeology

In February 2022, two officers of the Superintendence took part in a 3-day workshop held in Rome. The training team of the workshop was led by Mr. Corrado Pedeli, Senior conservator-restorer of the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage of Valle d'Aosta, and ICCROM Consultant/Lecturer, with several years of experience in

the field of archaeological conservation practices. The workshop was sponsored by the International Institute for Conservation – Italian Group and the *Pontificia Commissione di Archeologia Sacra* of the Vatican State, and it provided theoretical and practical experience on the latest procedures for first aid and conservation practice during an archaeological excavation.

Archaeological Monitoring and Discoveries

The Archaeology Monitoring team regulates archaeological monitoring of ongoing development works and continues to maintain an important role in the management of the archaeology resource which may be discovered in development sites falling within areas of archaeological sensitivity. The Team's function is not limited to the identification of archaeological features but also extends to their proper documentation and safeguarding.

Archaeological monitoring is carried out by archaeologists approved to work under the direction of the Superintendence. During 2022, the Superintendence issued 396 Terms of Reference for development projects to be carried out under archaeology

surveillance and carried out 120 inspections in relation to ongoing surveillance projects. In 2022, archaeological surveillance yielded a total of 112 new discoveries. The archaeologists present on site monitoring these works on behalf of the Superintendence, also carried out investigations and records for these discoveries, as directed by this office. Once such investigations were concluded, various mitigation measures were adopted by the Superintendence to ensure the preservation of these features. By the end of 2022, 158 archaeology monitoring cases from 2021 and the preceding years have been closed, and a total of 199 certifications for the successful completion of archaeological surveillance cases, were issued by the Superintendence.

Table 2: Breakdown of the 112 discoveries made in 2022 by category

Category	Number of Sites
Agricultural	35
Agricultural/Domestic/Water Storage/Water Management	4
Agricultural/Industrial	3
Agricultural/Structural/Unidentified	1
Agricultural/Water Storage/Water Management	6
Architectural Element - Roundel	1
Domestic	2
Funerary	1
Industrial	4
Military	3
Pottery Scatter	7
Structural Remains	6
Structural/Industrial	2
Structural/Water Storage/Water Management	3
Transport/Domestic	1
Undetermined	8
Undetermined – Cultural Material	2
Water Management/Water Storage/Industrial	1
Water Storage/Management/Military	4
Water Storage/Water management	18

Table 3 below gives an overview of the more remarkable archaeological discoveries made in 2022.

Table 3: Remarkable archaeological discoveries made in 2022

Site	Locality
Accidental Discovery on site at Triq Apap Bologna	Marsascala
Accidental Discovery on site at Triq Zimmerman Barbaro	Żurrieq
Aqueduct (Part of Wignacourt), Triq Birkirkara	Attard
Classical Remains, Ta' Qali	Ta' Qali, Attard
Early Modern and multi-period Remains at Triq San Pawl	Il-Belt Valletta
Silo pit in Daħlet id-Dejr	Rabat, Malta
Silo pit and Cart Ruts in Triq San Benedittu	Kirkop
Silo pits in Triq l-Aħħar Hbit mit-Torok	Żejtun

Accidental Discovery of water management features on site at Triq Apap Bologna, Marsascala, Malta

During an accidental discovery in Marsascala, several features related to a water catchment system were uncovered. The Superintendence was notified of the discoveries and immediate action was taken. The discoveries consisted of a rectangular cistern which

originally had an arched roof, a cylindrical well which was connected to the cistern via a horizontal passage cut into rock, and a large bell shaped cistern as well as a number of rectangular rock cut trenches of various sizes. Discussions are currently underway for a way forward with regards to the features vis-à-vis the proposed development.



Discovery of a cistern leading to a well in Triq Apap Bologna, Marsascala. PHOTO: JG PERITI



Discovery of a cylindrical well in Triq Apap Bologna, Marsascala. Photo: JG Periti

Accidental Discovery of a cistern on site at Triq Zimmerman Barbaro, Żurrieq

Another accidental discovery has revealed an extensive cistern with a double vaulted roof which was partially damaged during soil/material removal. Due to the large size of this cistern, there is the possibility that originally it was dug to quarry globigerina for construction and then converted into a cistern. Currently, the Superintendence is undergoing discussions with the developer for its retention.



Discovery of a cistern in Triq Zimmerman Barbaro, Żurrieq. PHOTO: SCH

Part of the Wignacourt Aqueduct, on a site at Triq Birkirkara, Attard, Malta

The development site falls within the known documented trajectory of the Wignacourt Aqueduct, still visible within the 1968 survey sheets. During the consultation at development application stage, the Superintendence had already identified the risk of uncovering the continuation of the remains of the aqueduct in this area. The Superintendence established a methodology for works during soil/material removal. The soil cover on site was shallow and consisted of garden soil resting on the bedrock surface, and no archaeological stratigraphy was present. Upon completion of soil removal within the area in question, a tract of the aqueduct, partially in very poor condition and parts of which in better condition, were discovered. Upon completion of the remaining soil/material removal works on site, agricultural trenches were also discovered. Very scanty archaeological material

was yielded from within the agricultural features. The discovered aqueduct was preserved on site and integrated within the development.



Discovery of features on site. PHOTO: JB ARCH TEAM

Classical Remains, Ta' Qali, Attard, Malta

The development at the site in subject, consisted of the redevelopment of an abandoned site whereby heavy ground disturbance including rock cutting had already



Discovery of features (marked in blue dashed line) on a heavily disturbed site, Ta' Qali, Malta. PHOTO: SKAVARC



Discovery of features on a heavily disturbed site, Ta' Qali, Malta. PHOTO: SKAVARC

been carried out in the 1990s and early 2000s. The site is located in an area of archaeological sensitivity whereby a cluster of recorded archaeological remains, ranging from prehistoric sites to classical sites, have been discovered throughout the years including several rock-cut tombs, an inhumation in an amphora, several articulated skeletons, numerous clay vessels, some copper items, and quaternary strata. Archaeological monitoring on site was carried out in the form of an archaeological investigation. Field walking, and trial trenches were carried out prior to the start of bulk soil/material removal works. During the course of these works a number of different types of archaeological features were discovered in the areas whereby limited ground disturbance in the past has been carried out. The features discovered, include, agricultural trenches, post holes, water channels, classical masonry, and a classical period road with in situ deposits covering cart ruts. All the features discovered on site have been investigated archaeologically. Classical period pottery was recovered from within these features.



Discovery of features on a heavily disturbed site, Ta' Qali, Malta. PHOTO: SKAVARC

The Superintendence was in discussion with regards to the way forward with the architects and the stake holders throughout the implementation of the project. The ashlar masonry, ancient road and cart ruts will be preserved on site, and changes to the approved plans to accommodate the retention of these features, were executed.

Early Modern and multi-period Remains at Triq San Pawl, Valletta

Monitoring works in a town house in Valletta and adjoining property continued from the previous year. More archaeological features and structural remains were discovered, relating to the townhouse and previous surrounding dwellings. Discoveries include flagstone flooring at different levels and remains of walls, demarcating the extents of various rooms, steps leading to shallow basement, a cylindrical shaft



Truncated rock cut remains on site at Triq San Pawl, Valletta. PHOTO: NICOLE MICALLEF



Flooring and paving remains on site at Triq San Pawl, Valletta. PHOTO: NICOLE MICALLEF



Structural Remains on site at Triq San Pawl, Valletta. PHOTO: NICOLE MICALLEF

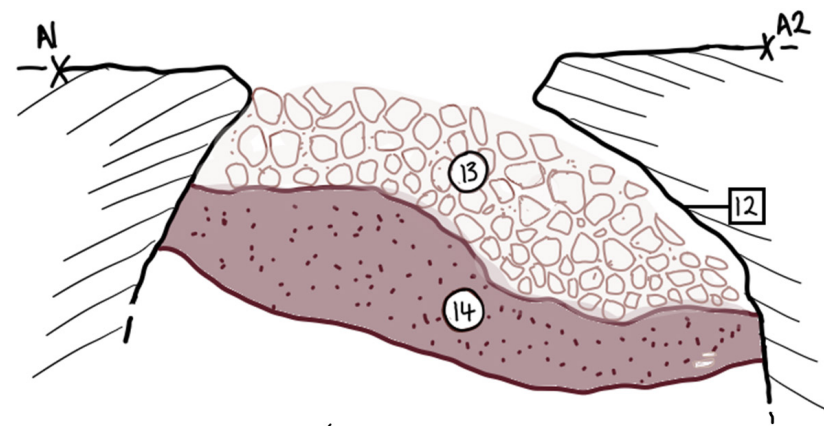


Rock cut and structural remains on site at Triq San Pawl, Valletta. PHOTO: NICOLE MICALLEF

together with a number of bell-shaped cisterns. Some of the latter were truncated by previous interventions while another contained pottery vessels broken in situ at its base (such containers were used to collect water from the well). Stone water channels were also discovered together with an old drainage system. These remains, together with a traditional Maltese oven discovered in previous years, provide further insight on the construction and layout of the traditional local townhouse.

Silo pit in Dahlet id-Dejr, Rabat

During monitoring works for the redevelopment of plot located close to the catacomb complex of *Abbatija tad-Dejr*, several discoveries were made which include agricultural trenches and a circular pit. After a stratigraphic investigation, the circular pit was identified as a Bronze Age closed context silo pit. A considerable amount of pottery shards



DAH2022 Drawn by KH 22/08/2022

Elevation of Deposits within the silo pit at Dahlet id-Dejr. PHOTO: JB ARCH TEAM



Discovery of an almost intact vessel within the archaeological deposits. PHOTO: JB ARCH TEAM



Discovery of an almost intact vessel within the archaeological deposits. PHOTO: JB ARCH TEAM



Silo pit at Dahlet id-Dejr. PHOTO: JB ARCH TEAM

which include a number of diagnostic pieces, animal bone, and loom weights, were discovered. Within the agricultural trenches, mixed material was found. This is an important discovery when it is considered within its archaeological landscape, and it will be preserved

in situ. The archaeology investigation team will study further the material retrieved.

Silo pits in Triq l-Aħħar Hbit mit-Torok, Żejtun

The development of the site in subject, was subject to archaeological monitoring of works due to the archaeological sensitivity in the surroundings. Various archaeological features including tombs, silos, and agricultural trenches, have been discovered in the surrounding landscape of this site. Information of 2 silos located with the site in subject was also available to the Superintendence. Archaeological monitoring within this site consisted of an archaeological investigation from its inception. The Superintendence requested field walking and a number of trial trenches to be carried out during the preliminary stages of the archaeological investigation. These exercises yielded the discovery of further silos. Upon the completion of this process, soil/material removal works throughout the whole footprint of the site commenced. During this process



Close up of one of the Silos in Triq l-Aħħar Hbit mit-Torok, Żejtun. PHOTO: CHANTAL CASSAR



Discovery of Silos in Triq l-Aħħar Hbit mit-Torok, Żejtun. PHOTO: CHANTAL CASSAR

further discoveries of silos, agricultural trenches, quarry cuts, and post holes, have been discovered. The Superintendence requested the retention of the silos on site, and the plans for the development are being amended to ensure their preservation.

Silo pit and Cart Ruts in Triq San Benedittu, Kirkop

The development on site consisted of, redevelopment of an existing structure, and part development of a field. During the consultation period, the Superintendence requested archaeological monitoring on the basis of vicinity to rock cut features including quarrying and



Cart ruts discovered on site at Triq San Benedittu, Kirkop. PHOTO: JB ARCH TEAM

agricultural trenches as well as vicinity to Class B catacombs. Prior to the start of works on site, a well was already visible on site. No stratigraphy has been discovered during the soil removal works, however, further features on site consisting of a circular cut and two parallel cuts were discovered during this process. Upon investigation of these features by the archaeology monitors as directed by the Superintendence, the newly discovered features were determined to be a silo pit and a set of cart ruts. The Superintendence requested the retention of the well, silo, and cart ruts on site. The plans for the development have been amended and the features were protected in situ.



Site post exposure of bedrock, Triq San Benedittu, Kirkop. PHOTO: JB ARCH TEAM



Silo pit discovered on site at Triq San Benedittu, Kirkop. PHOTO: JB ARCH TEAM

Underwater Archaeology

Many areas around and off the coast of Malta are historically and archaeologically sensitive and the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage, ratified by Malta in 2021, ensures the protection of our underwater cultural heritage.

As a result, SCH regulates any works or research which is to take place underwater. SCH Executive Officers and Underwater Archaeologists monitor projects throughout various stages of works, and issue terms of reference to ensure proper methodology is followed that will safeguard potential cultural heritage.

In 2022, several dive inspections took place to assess sites which required approval and monitoring before or during the development or restoration works. This involves desk research followed by daily dives to investigate the seabed and surrounding coastal areas to determine if any evidence of cultural heritage exists on the seabed or may exist below the sediment.

SCH also regulates any studies being done around the coast or in Maltese territorial waters. To ensure all entities follow protocol when conducting research, permits are issued with specific conditions and terms that must be followed before and during any work that is being conducted. For example, surveys of the seabed carried out by Universities and Consultancy firms for research or investigative purposes often take place in archaeologically or historically sensitive areas and SCH must be notified if archaeological discoveries are observed during the studies, before works or studies continue.

Scientific sampling and testing of underwater archaeological remains (including radiocarbon dating, a DNA analysis and biological analysis) as well as the export of material abroad to specialised facilities also requires a permit from SCH. Several organisations filed application requests to obtain such permits in 2022 which SCH reviewed for approval. This ensures a protocol is followed for testing and preservation of artefacts, particularly if an invasive process is required. The information that is garnered from such testing is provided to SCH in the form of a report or publication

that is used for future research or to inform the public, and also populates our GIS portal with underwater site location information.

Both the Heritage Consultation Unit and Underwater Archaeology team collaborate regularly with other Government entities on development projects, by limiting any negative impact on areas of cultural sensitivity. For example, in 2022, an area off *Ix-Xatt l-Aħmar* was investigated, surveyed, and selected for the scuttling of the Hephaestus, an oil tanker that had run aground off Qawra in 2018, to add to the diving attractions in the area while allowing for sustainable tourism projects to proceed. Furthermore, in conjunction with the Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit at Heritage Malta, SCH assesses applications and issues declarations for underwater archaeological zones, designating buffer zones that provide protection for our cultural heritage from marine traffic and marine spoil dumping. These zones are located in various areas around the Maltese islands in territorial waters up to twelve nautical miles beyond the coast.

At the present time, SCH is also working with local NGOs and organisations within the Voluntary sector involved with clean-ups around the island, on land and underwater. Inadvertently, during these very important projects that are geared to improving the status of the environment, cultural heritage may be located or damaged. The Superintendence has initiated discussions with representatives from these organisations to guide them on the process that must be followed should culturally sensitive material be discovered. Groups or individuals are required to notify the Superintendence within 24 hours if cultural heritage has been located, along with information on the location and condition of findings for future reference.

The increased development and its impact on coastal heritage sites in conjunction with climate change and coastal erosion has been of great concern and is the impetus for several initiatives that have been created to meet **Malta's Sustainable Development Vision for 2050**. The Superintendence has participated in providing

relevant data on cultural heritage sites, particularly those at risk, to various organisations including Marine Spatial Planning, 'Coastal SAGE' (*Coastal Satellite-Assisted Governance for Erosion*), 'CoMMon Coast' (*Collaborative Management and Monitoring of the Coast*) and future participation in 'CHerISH' (*Coastal Heritage: Safeguarding against Hazard*). Staff have presented at several conferences to discuss the effects of climate change and associated coastal erosion on cultural heritage sites in Malta and Gozo and will continue to participate and offer its expertise to ensure our national underwater heritage is preserved.

In addition, SCH is a major partner and contributor to the EU funded Blue Culture Technology Excellence (BCT) Hubs project. This 4-year project aims to build Research & Innovation capacities in the Blue Economy sector to support underwater cultural heritage science (including scientific research and tourism valorisation) and its sustainable use both nationally and internationally. BCT Hubs will provide innovative solutions and products, as well as develop plans for continued sustainable protection, restoration, valorisation, management, accessibility, and promotion of underwater cultural heritage.

2. National Inventory Processes

The Superintendence of Cultural Heritage has focused on improving and expanding its inventory, enabling accessibility, and proposing protection of important sites. This was achieved through the following actions:

- Improved internal process for **the population and storage of data** collected across the entity, as well as more efficient **sharing of data between officers** of the Superintendence in carrying out day to day obligations;
- The launching of **a new and improved public**

interface of a **more wholistic and precise National Inventory of Immovable Property**; and

- Scheduling proposals and statutory protection.

The current focus of the National Inventory is on immovable heritage which has led in the past 2 years to invest in a Geographical Information System (GIS) administered internally. GIS offers a simple interface for data collection, presentation and analysis which allows for wider participation across all units and teams of the Superintendence as well as the general public.

Data Population Processes

During the last year, the Superintendence has embarked on two major projects aimed at drastically improving data input and sharing processes, aimed to facilitate the collection, centralise its storage, and produce real time statistics. The first of which is related to the daily inspections carried out by every team within the Superintendence, on different sites, mostly in relation to development or discoveries. These inspections add up to a few hundred every year and were being recorded in tabular format. With the new designed system, every inspection will be geo located and accessible for all officers to see in real time.

The second revolves around archaeological monitoring and discoveries. This is a lengthy process which starts by the issuing of Terms of Reference before any archaeological work is carried out. There were many stages which had to be considered and several teams involved which had to be consulted. The large amount of data generated from roughly 350 cases a year was

always documented in tabular format in different files and thus a GIS system has been designed to bring all data together. This will also facilitate the inventory processes, since it will make a distinction between sites and features, discoveries and no discoveries.

The result of both projects is a task-specific GIS system where officers of the Superintendence can easily submit and review their data through a simple interface, which reduces processing time, human error, and improves efficiency. The entire process of analysing and reviewing processes and procedures, designing the back-end architecture of the system, designing the interface, testing and staff training, was undertaken internally by officers who in the past years have followed courses in Geomatics through SpatialTRAIN scheme run by the Planning Authority. This was happening in parallel with regular maintenance and upgrading of GIS tools and portals which have been developed in 2021.

Internal Data Library

In 2021, upon acquiring the necessary GIS software licences, the Superintendence sought to maximise its use so that GIS was being used not only to record data, but also to disseminate such data, and enable simple spatial querying. By the beginning of 2022, the officers of the Superintendence had access to an internal GIS hub where they could find various GIS tools and data

available. This was significantly expanded in the last 12 months.

The digitised data is accessible through a web map with several data sets in separate layers. Some of these layers, such as those originating from data capture projects, are live and real time; where any

data added is immediately available. Other layers are updated periodically in line with project work flows. The new layers introduced in 2022 reflect the different data capturing exercise the Superintendence

A New, More Accessible Inventory

In December 2022, the Superintendence launched a new website which includes a GIS portal supporting the National Inventory. This redesign, together with the possibilities of GIS, brought the National Inventory into a new age, moving away from lists and attachments towards a map-based more user friendly interface. The new GIS interface which can be accessed through the website <https://schmalta.maps.arcgis.com/apps/>

A More Holistic and Precise Inventory

In parallel to the transformation of the Inventory from tabular to spatial format, the Superintendence carried out a review of the existing data and noted some gaps and inaccuracies in the existing data sets.

When originally the National Inventory started to be populated, the Superintendence had started a data capture exercise on niches, statues and religious reliefs which was left unfinished. The data captured, which amounted to over 1,800 points, had been published and has since been available as part of the National Inventory. The project, which has been going on since the beginning of the Summer, saw the entire spatial data of the religious typology checked for such errors or inaccuracies, which partly resulting from limited technology availability when data was being collected. This led to the identification of 412 corrections which will be updated in 2023. In addition, over 600 religious cultural properties were identified to potentially be included in the National Inventory. Apart from desktop research, this also required several inspections being

undertakes. During 2022, the Superintendence has also initiated talks with third parties with the aim of acquiring further data to assist it in its daily tasks.

webappviewer/index.html no longer consists only of the properties published as forming part of the inventory, but it additionally now also includes Cultural Heritage Discoveries made through the years. This data, with a limited set of attributes, has been made public for the first time so as to provide an important resource to stakeholders and the public in general.

carried out throughout the last quarter of the year. 468 inspections were in fact carried out in 2022, with data being inputted directly on site through a GIS system. This phase of the project is nearing completion. Subsequently, data will need to be cleaned, filtered, merged, and finally published online in what would be a 2-step effort; one to correct the spatial inaccuracies of already plotted features and one to add those unplotted features, finally completing the religious typology.

In addition, in line with the Cultural Heritage Act, the Superintendence is also preparing another batch of properties to be included to the National Inventory, which reflect those properties of Cultural Significance that have been scheduled since the last update. Since 2019, the Superintendence has been directly involved in proposing to the Planning Authority Executive Council over 110 newly scheduled properties which will make up the first batch to be published in 2023.

Scheduling

During 2022, the Superintendence has been involved in a total of 20 scheduling case and/or exercises, most

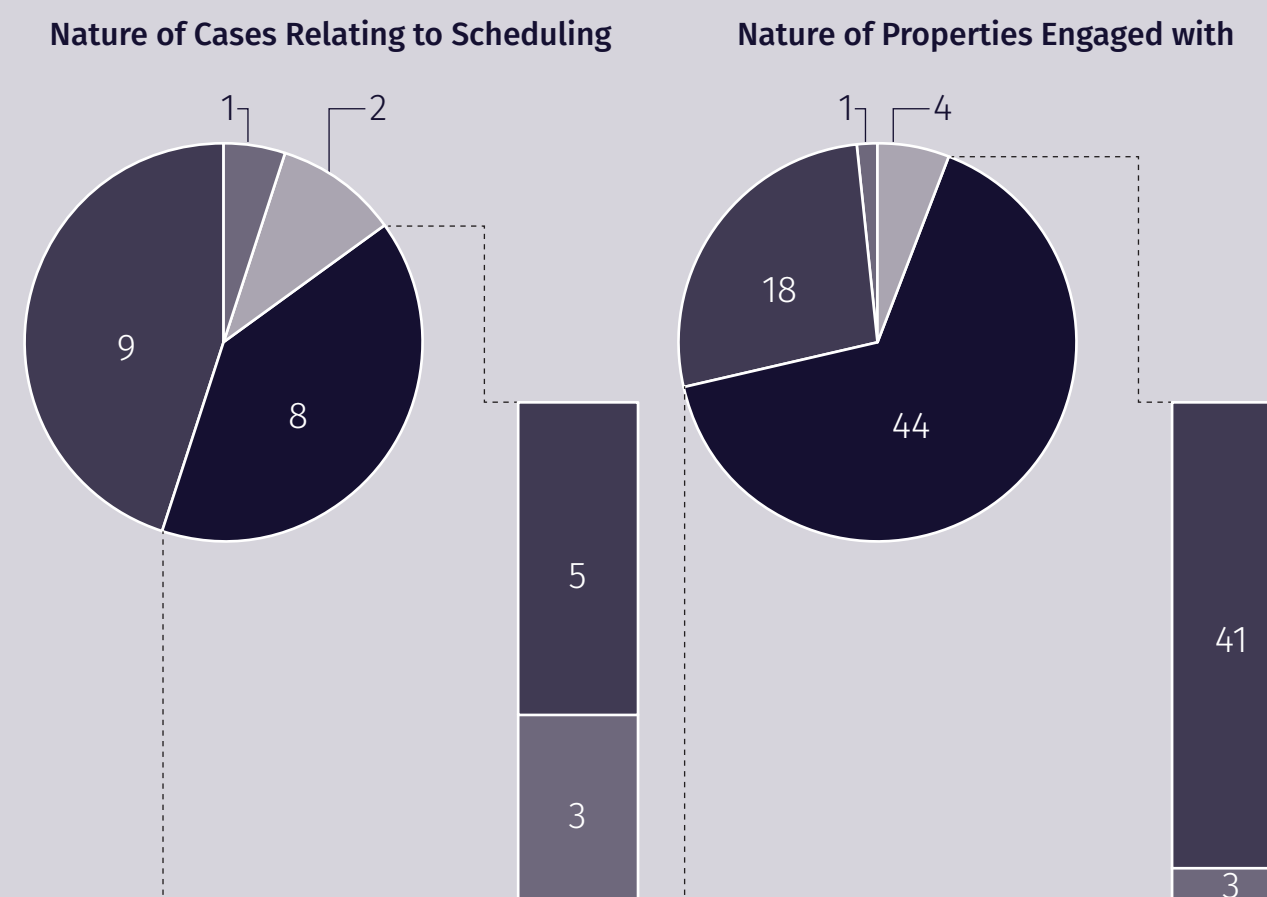
of which have been brought forward from 2021. In 9 of the cases, the Superintendence was presenting

its appraisal in a request for reconsideration of a recently published scheduling, 1 of the cases was acting as a consultee to the Planning Authority in an appeal case, in 2 other cases the Superintendence was working on proposals for new scheduling which originated internally, whilst in the other 8 cases the Superintendence was working on external requests for consideration. The latter amounts to 40% of the cases as can be seen in the figure below. One of the reconsideration cases consisted of 10 properties, an internal proposal submitted covered 3 properties, and two of the exercises which originated from external requests consisted of multiple properties. These together amount to 38 individual properties, which the Superintendence individually assessed in formulating its recommendation to the Executive Council of the Planning Authority. There are more pending cases brought forward from previous years, with which the Superintendence did not engage in 2022, namely 8

open appeal cases and 6 proposals for new scheduling, all of which are at the Planning Authority's discretion.

The Superintendence proposes the scheduling of properties to the Planning Authority Executive Council through the provisions of article 58 of the Cultural Heritage Act. The Superintendent's involvement is not limited to making the original submission but extends to making submission at both reconsiderations and appeals stage. As the number of approved scheduling proposals increased, so did the number of reconsiderations and appeals, resulting in further engagement by the Superintendence so as to defend its original position. This put a strain on the Superintendence's resources at the detriment of proposing new scheduling. Currently, there are 49 pending proposals for scheduling with which the Superintendence has submitted to the Planning Authority.

Figure 1. Cases vs Properties the Superintendence engaged with during 2022 (where there were no changes in value it was not replicated)



The process to schedule a property and/or revisit an existing scheduling is a long and intensive one. All the proposals, whether deriving from an internal data capture or drawn to the entity’s attention through a third-party request, are studied thoroughly before a case can be compiled. Each case is presented to the Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee together with a first recommendation, in favour or against scheduling, and where applicable assigned a grade

or class. Then, a formal request for the case to be presented to the Executive Council of the Planning Authority is made and all documentation submitted for the records of the Planning Authority. This year, the Superintendence made 4 of these requests for the protection (or otherwise) of 43 properties, a 5th for the revision of 3 existing scheduling, and a 6th to discuss a reconsideration request (which is not yet concluded as of the end of 2022), as outlined in the table below.

Table 4: Requests referred to Executive Council and their status

Request #	Property	Number of Properties	Grade (Proposed / Existing)	Date of Presentation	Publication
1	Marsa Water Tower; Third Party Request	1	Grade 1 (p.)	Requested made in February 22.	15/03/2022 GN 314/22
2	Third Party Request (NGO)	9	Various (p.)	Requested made in March 22.	Pending
2	Third Party Request (NGO)	29	Various (p.)	Requested made in March 22.	Pending
3	Sliema	1	Grade 2 (p.)	Requested made in April 22.	Pending
4	Palazzina Vincenti	3	ECO Grade 1 (ex.)	Requested made in September 22.	12/12/22 GN 1685/22 (ECO)
5	Sigġiewi; Third Party Request (Owner)	1	AAI (ex.)	Requested made in October 22.	Pending
5	Mqabba; Third Party Request (Owner)	1	Grade 1 (ex.)	Requested made in October 22.	Pending
5	Victoria, Gozo; Third Party Request (Owner)	1	Grade 2 (ex.)	Requested made in October 22.	Pending
6	Reconsideration from the 2020 scheduling of Archaeological Features in Xagħra, Gozo	1	Class A (ex.)	Requested made in April 22.	In Progress

Out of these 6 requests, the Planning Authority has discussed 3, resulting in the scheduling of the Marsa Abattoir’s Gate, Courtyard and Water Tower, a second Emergency Conservation Order on Palazzina Vincenti in St Julian’s, and a deferred decision on a request to reconsider recent scheduling in Xagħra Gozo, which will be continued in the early months of 2023. The other 3 requests remain pending as of the end of 2022, and are to be added to a pending case requested by the Superintendence in 2021 for the scheduling of 4 properties (Mosta, Mosta, Żejtun & Żebbuġ), for which the decision was deferred. Another 2 requests to discuss the scheduling of 2 properties (Żejtun & Gżira)

proposed by third parties, which the Superintendence also submitted in 2021 but was never called upon. At this stage, the properties which the Superintendence has made a request for them to be placed on the Executive Council’s Agenda were inspected externally for documentation purposes.

In accordance with the Development Planning Act, the owner of a property which has been scheduled can submit a request to the Planning Authority to reconsider the scheduling. The Superintendence is heavily engaged in these processes as well. In 2022, the Superintendence has reappraised and evaluated

9 requests, which were submitted to the Planning Authority on 18 individual properties. As part of this process, the Superintendence also inspected two properties at the owner’s request, in conjunction with

the Planning Authority’s Executive Council and Heritage Planning Unit. Out of these 9 requests, 8 have been concluded, as can be seen in the table following.

Table 5: Requests for reconsideration received

Year of Scheduling	Property	Grade	Decision	Publication
2019	Naxxar	Grade 2	Scheduling Confirmed	N/A
2020	Casa Guardamanga, Telgħet ta’ Guardamanga, Pieta’	Grades 1, 2 & 3	Scheduling Revised from Grade 1 to Grade 1 with parts at Grade 2 and 3	02/12/2022 GN 1634/22
2020	Villa Cal Rose, Triq ix-Xatt, Pieta’	Grades 1, 2 & 3	Scheduling Revised in terms of outline	02/12/2022 GN 1634/22
2021	Mqabba	Grade 1	Scheduling Confirmed	N/A
2021	Tarxien	Buffer Zone	Scheduling Confirmed	N/A
2021	Tarxien	Buffer Zone	Scheduling Confirmed	N/A
2021	Tarxien	Buffer Zone	Scheduling Confirmed	N/A
2021	10 Properties at Triq il-Knisja, Tarxien, scheduled as a Buffer Zone to Villa Barbaro	Buffer Zone	Removed from Buffer Zone	02/12/2022 GN 1634/22
2020	Xagħra, Gozo	Class A	Pending	



The Abbattoir’s Water Tower. PHOTO: SCH

As with any decision taken by the Planning Authority, scheduling can be appealed through the Environment and Planning Review Tribunal. Again, the Superintendence is called upon by the Planning Authority as an external consultee in such cases.

3.

Registry and Archives

Registry

The Registry and Archives of the Superintendence are an important resource of information which is crucial to the workings of the Superintendence. The documentation consists of files which document the workings of the Superintendence and previous Museums Department, together with detailed reports, plans and drawings related to consultations on Planning and Development where there was a potential of threat to cultural heritage, or Research-based Archaeology Projects available

for staff reference and research. This area is presently being reorganized to ensure space is used efficiently and duplication of material is eliminated. The National Archives of Malta are also involved in appraising the process to ensure we follow protocol and preserve our essential documentation in the best manner possible. This includes not only documentation but also photographs, negatives and slides which will be digitized for future preservation and public access.

Archives

In 2022, the process, which originally commenced in 2019, of filtering through the planning and consultancy Registry files ranging from 1934 to the present, continued to eliminate duplication of material that could be accessed via the Planning Authority E-Application site. The aim is to create space for the vast amount of data that had been collected throughout the years, and to prepare material for future digitisation that will provide easy access to those researching or requesting data.

With the appraisal and approval of the National Archives of Malta, the removal of unnecessary documentation and reorganisation of the Registry, has allowed for a well-ordered retrieval system that is efficient.

Interestingly, this process has called attention to particular periods where a larger number of files existed due to an increase in development, particularly during 2010 and 2015. Research is presently taking place by a University of Malta Masters student to understand the various fluctuations in consultation received and the reasons behind the increased or decreased level of activity during particular years which will be available to the public in the very near future.

The Registry, both in physical and digital format, continues to be a source of significant information for staff at SCH and researchers alike when accessing historical and archaeological documents with the ultimate aim of preserving the national heritage of Malta and Gozo.

The Archival area contains material relating to archaeological investigations whether a discovery was made or not in both development-led projects and research-based projects. Each site studied is given a Site Code and Year which relates to the area being excavated and year in which this was taking place. This area is also being reorganised, and digitisation which was initiated in 2020, is set to continue in the very near future. All surveys, maps, reports, written notebooks, photographs, and detailed documentation such as archaeological forms, reports, and evaluations, are housed here. Researchers can request to access the documentation which is of significant cultural heritage value by the year in which given sites were investigated along with the related site code.

The material is invaluable for comparative research purposes, and the Superintendence is in the process of re-indexing and cross-referencing data to assist staff and researchers in accessing material and making connections between sites, ensuring missing data is located. This becomes particularly important when researching sites where investigations were referenced in the distant past by previous archaeologists and put on hold for future generations until additional resources, funding or advanced technological resources, became available.

One interesting project in the Archives that is presently being undertaken involves the digitisation of old

photographs from investigations or archaeological research projects. These photos will be logged and placed in digital folders for easy access and will certainly provide some insightful information for future researchers.

4. Movable Heritage



The Superintendence of Cultural Heritage regulates the import and export of cultural goods moving between Malta and EU Member States, as well as from, or to

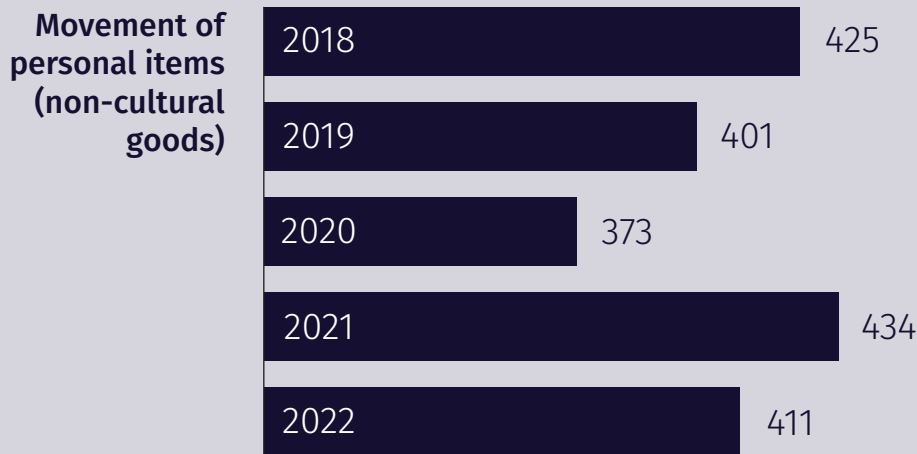
non-EU countries. These cases are referred to the Superintendence by the Customs Department, shipping companies, or MaltaPost *p.l.c.*

Certification for the Movement of Goods (Personal Items Excluding Cultural Heritage Objects)

In keeping with long-standing practice, the Superintendence also reviews the export and movement of “personal items”, to ensure that these items do not include cultural heritage items. In 2020, the Superintendence introduced processing fees for applications pertaining to the permanent export of non-cultural personal effects, standard processing fee being €35 and €65 in case of express service.

In the course of 2022, the Superintendence reviewed **411** cases of export and movement, in which cases the exporter had declared that no item of cultural heritage value was being exported. The number of cases marked a slight decrease on the previous year, being 23 cases less than in 2021 (**434**), 38 cases more than in 2020 (**373**), 10 cases more than in 2019 (**401** cases), and 14 cases less than those processed in 2018 (**425** cases).

Figure 2. Statistics showing movement of personal items for period 2018-2022



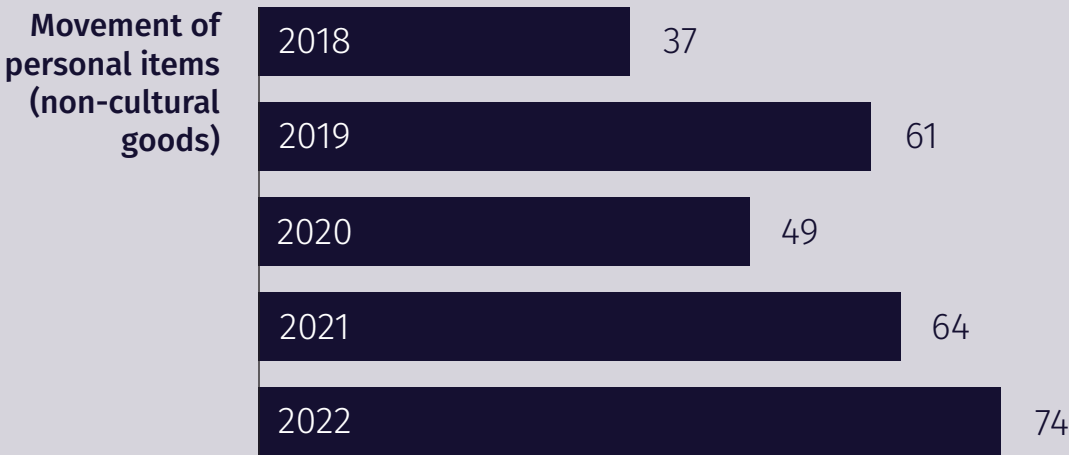
Export of Cultural Heritage Items Leaving the National Territory

As stated at law, the export of cultural heritage items from Malta requires permission from the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage. In the course of 2022, the Superintendence issued a total of 74 permits for the export of cultural heritage items. Of these 74 permits, 35 cases were for the export of cultural heritage items (a total of approximately 669 cultural heritage items of which included collections of maps, paintings and military armour) and 39 cases were for

the export of contemporary or decorative art (a total of 81 modern cultural items). None of the cases treated required inspection of the items, since adequate information for assessment had been made available to the Superintendence.

The 74 permissions granted in 2022 marked a significant increase over permissions as issued in 2021 (64 cases), 2020 (49 cases), and in 2019 (61 cases).

Figure 3. Statistics showing number of permits granted for permanent export of Art or Antiques for period 2018-2022



Temporary Movement of Cultural Goods

The Superintendence also reviews and regulates applications for the temporary export of cultural goods out of the Maltese territory for purposes of restoration, exhibition, study, or for other cultural purposes. 16 permits involving the temporary movement/ export of

a total of various cultural heritage items were issued in 2022, marking a significant increase on the 9 permits issued in 2021, and the previous 0 permits issued in 2020.

Inspection and Certification of Cultural Items Imported from Outside the European Union

As stated at law, the Superintendence is also called upon by Customs to inspect and certify cultural heritage items that are imported from outside the European Union. This process is initiated by the importer in order to comply with Customs procedures. A 5% of the value of the item in question is collected as per S.L 35.03 and L.N.4 of 1968, as amended by L.N.104 of 1981 and L.N.407 of 2007. The *ad valorem* fee of five per cent of the cultural goods’ value as accepted by the Superintendence may be waived when the nature of import involves educational, restoration and/or public exhibition purposes.

Items inspected in 2022 included an array of antique furniture, numismatic collections, silverware, ceramics,

memorabilia, paintings, archaeological artefacts, and glassware.

In the course of 2022, the Superintendence inspected and certified the import of 238 cases involving cultural items. These 238 cases mark a substantial increase on the 52 consignments inspected in 2021, the 27 cases inspected in 2020, and the 25 cases inspected in 2019. The Brexit phenomenon has had a notable impact on this procedure since the United Kingdom is now subject to the same procedures as other countries which fall outside the EU.

These inspections of imported items generated a substantial revenue which was a marked increase

from that generated in previous years. This marked increase is not only due to the increase in the number of inspections from previous years, but also due to the exceptional import of prestigious and costly items in the course of a given year.

The Customs Department may choose to release cultural goods without prior consent of the

Superintendence when items of cultural value are imported from within or outside the EU. A number of such instances in 2022 involved the release of imported cultural goods originating from outside the EU including antique furniture, paintings, numismatic collections, and decorative pieces, which were initially registered with the Superintendence but consequently cleared by the Customs Department.

Figure 4. Statistics showing certification of imported cultural heritage items for period 2018-2022

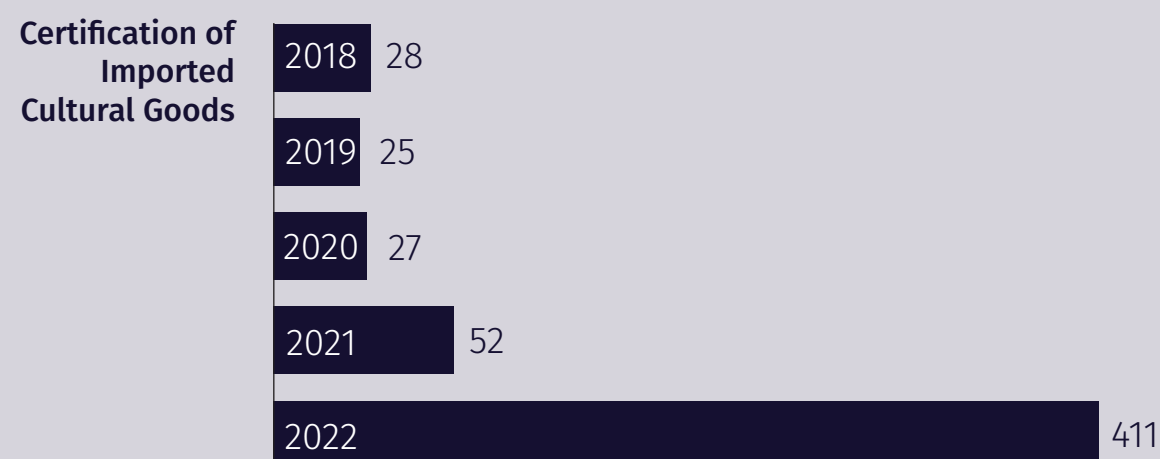
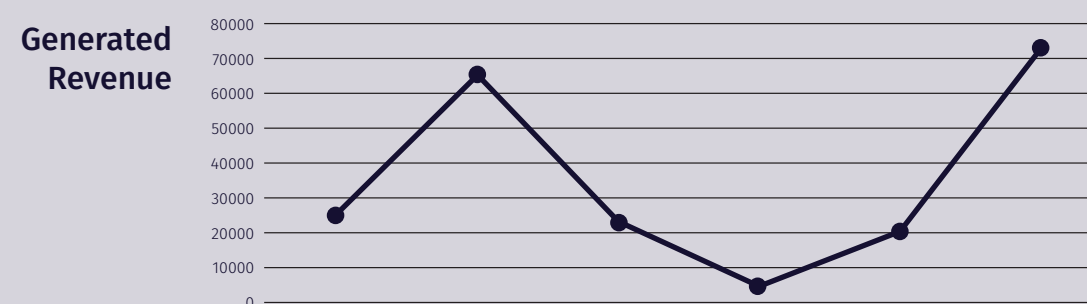


Figure 5. Revenue generated from import inspections



Import for Educational, Restoration and/or Public Exhibition Purposes

In 2022, twenty cases involved the inspection of cultural effects which were **temporarily imported for restoration** or **public exhibition** purposes. The *ad valorem* fee of five per cent of the items' value as accepted by the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage,

together with such expenses as may be necessary in connection with such examination as per L.N. 35.03, were waived as the nature of these imports was for the aforementioned purposes.

Liaison with National and International Agencies in Enforcing Movement of Cultural Items

In 2022, the Superintendence continued to attend Expert Group meetings and Project Groups presently organised remotely by TAXUD and the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council between all Member States on Customs issues related to cultural goods and governing EU policy. During these meetings, Member States discuss pressing issues including the return of cultural objects under directive 2014/60/EU, the preparation for the implementation of the Import Regulation 880/2019, and the foreseen introduction of an EU-wide registration system.

The Superintendence retained access to the EU's Commission International Market Information System known as the IMI portal, which allows for direct and

bilateral exchanges between Member States. The system is used when an authority or regulatory entity has reason to believe that a return of a cultural item is possible through this administrative procedure. The contacted authority has to be able to identify the concerned item via the notification.

The Superintendence attended workshops and meetings featuring further discussion on organised crime and counterterrorism, and also addressing the issue of illicit trade in cultural goods. These included the UNESCO conference held in Paris in June 2022 'Strengthening the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property – a UNESCO/European Union Conference'.

Monitoring of Restoration Works on Movable Cultural Property

The Superintendence of Cultural Heritage received a number of requests for the restoration of works of art, especially in conjunction with restoration funding schemes. The requests were supported by a restoration method statement drafted by warranted restorers who managed the restoration interventions. The majority of these cases pertained to church property and thus subsequent clearance and restoration monitoring was carried out by the Catholic Cultural Heritage Commission.

In the late months of 2022, the Superintendence introduced a registration procedure for all restoration works being undertaken on movable cultural property, whereby all warranted conservators are to inform the SCH of their intent to start works before undertaking such projects as arising from the obligations stipulated in the Cultural Heritage Act. Such notices apply for movable church property and movable private property alike.

Movable National Inventory

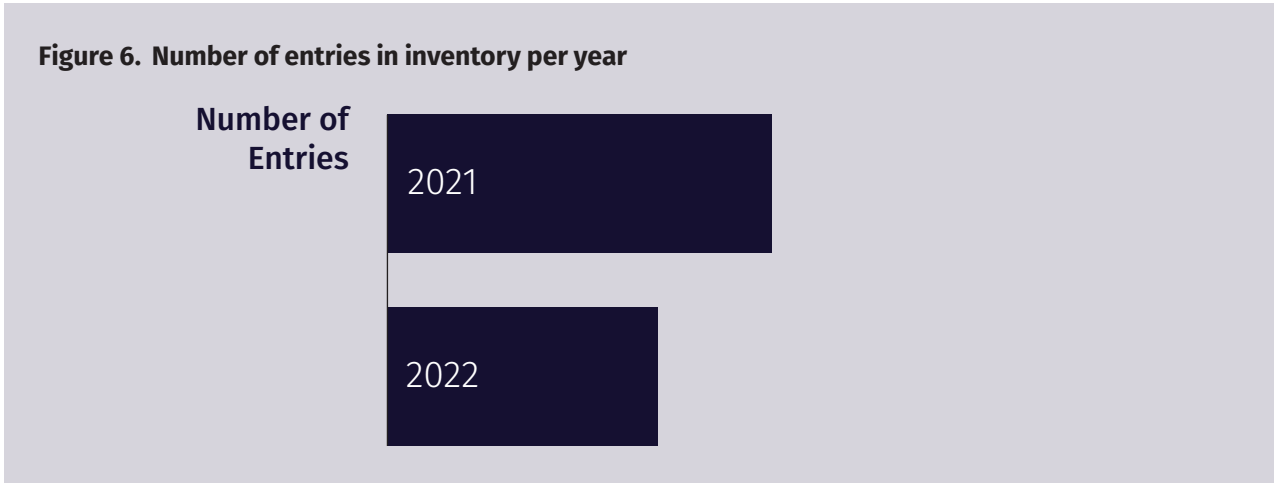
The collation of the movable collection within the repository of the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage continued in 2022. New entries were included within the National Inventory, whilst further research was undertaken on previously inventorised items.

The Superintendence has a repository that includes cultural material discovered in the last 30 years, all of

which are obtained from secure contexts. As part of the inventorying process, each item is given a unique number, photographed, and a number of attributes intended to properly and aptly describe each item is filled in. A total of 463 individual artefacts were inventorised during the year 2022, which when grouped by decade provide the following results:

Table 6: Number of artefacts inventoried by decade

Period	Number of Artefacts
1981 to 1990	6
1991 to 2000	8
2001 to 2010	35
2011 to 2020	298
2021 to 2022	116



The inventory of the Valletta repository has been completed, with action being undertaken to safeguard and preserve these items. The inventorying of the off-site repository is to be undertaken within the

following year. The following is a grouping of the artefacts inventoried so far, precluding to the artefacts inventorised within the year 2022:

Table 7: Number of artefacts inventoried so far by category

Period	Number of Artefacts
Archaeological Finds	358
Fine Arts	88
Industry or Industrial	3
Natural Sciences	1

The remit of the National Inventory is far and wide-reaching as defined in the Cultural Heritage Act, and this aspect of movable cultural heritage had so far remained untapped. Apart from the above exercise, it

is also being extended to include stolen goods which are being returned to the Superintendence by the Malta Police Force on the termination of the associated criminal procedures; and finds as reported by citizens.

Right of Preference

As prescribed by Article 40 of the Cultural Heritage Act, “In the case of sale, export, exchange, emphyteutic grant or lease of an object of cultural property the Superintendent shall have the right, with the approval

of the Minister in consultation with the Committee of acquiring the same, in preference to all others on equal conditions including consideration as that concluded between the parties”.

In the course of 2022, this measure was requested for a total of 27 tentative Right of Preference cases, which consisted of an array of cultural items including publications, paintings, manuscripts, and maps, which were tentatively to be acquired for the National Collection; 23 of such cases were utilised. Right of preference is generally carried out in the case of sale

at auction, or in connection with proposed export of cultural heritage items. Such action (in connection with sale at auction) is generally initiated on request of the concerned National Agency or directly by the Superintendence, with the intention of acquiring items deemed as significant assets for inclusion in the National Collection.

5. Heritage Advice on Building Development

Development Consultations: Land-Use and Development Applications

The Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, through its Heritage Planning Consultation Unit (HPCU), continued fulfilling its role as a designated statutory external consultee to the Planning Authority, on land-use and development planning applications. The Superintendence is consulted on all full development planning applications received by the Planning Authority, as well as on minor amendment applications, summary planning applications, development notification orders, dangerous structures, regularisation applications, and

planning control applications, which may have an impact on cultural heritage.

The Superintendence is also consulted on roadworks permit applications by Transport Malta and by the Environment and Resources Authority on reports of cultural heritage surveys as part of the Environment Impact Assessments. A classification by type and qualities of development applications is found in Table 7

Administrative Changes

Two officers moved from other units within the Superintendence to join the HPCU. One officer left the HPCU and assumed new duties within the Office of the Superintendent. The overall staff complement within the unit has thus increased during 2022. Two officers were promoted to Senior Executive Officers to better manage the unit, given also its increased complement. Given the increase in staff, the Superintendence was also able to designate one officer to be responsible for all roadworks applications.

The HPCU now consists of 1 Head of Unit (responsible also for the Built Heritage Restoration Inspectorate), 3 Senior Executive Officers, 10 Executive Officers, and 1 Administrative Assistant (shared with the Built Heritage Restoration Inspectorate). The new officers

underwent induction training which included lectures, workshops, and job-shadowing. The unit is now divided into 3 teams, 1 responsible for applications within the Urban Conservation Area (UCA), and the other 2 for applications within the Development Scheme and Outside Development Zone (ODZ). Given the new structure, all officers have now easier and immediate access to a Senior Executive Officer. This has helped in fostering increased efficiency and more consistency in the Superintendence's direction given to architects and clients during the processing of the planning applications. In addition, all Senior Executive Officers hold weekly meetings with the Head of Unit to discuss collegially any challenging applications, which provides an optimum environment for sharing experiences and knowledge.

Overview of Development Application Trends

During 2022, the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage received a total of **11,287** consultation requests from the Planning Authority on development planning applications (PA applications), of which the most significant included **6,376** first consultations (including summary applications), **2,548** re-consultations, and **830** minor amendment consultations (see Table 7). This amount excludes other types of development applications, such as Development Notification Orders (DNOs), Planning Control applications (PC), Dangerous Structures, Regularisations, and others. This marks

an increase of almost 6% on the previous year, where 10,685 planning consultations were received.

Besides the review of development planning applications, the Superintendence also reviews most applications regarding roadworks (RWP1s) permitted by Transport Malta. The road works permit applications received in 2022 increased significantly from 1,759 in 2021 to **2,399** in 2022.

Of the 6,376 first consultations, 2,577 applications

were responded to at filtering stage, which amounts to 40.5% of the total new consultations received. Significant increases, vis-à-vis 2021, were registered in consultations related to Minor Amendments, post-decision requirements, DNOs, and Dangerous Structures. This indicates a healthy increased

engagement in the assessment of cases which impact on cultural heritage between the Planning Authority and the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage. It will augur that this momentum of cooperation between the two entities is maintained, if not even fostered further.

Table 8: Number of the different types of development-related consultation requests received in 2022

Type of consultation received	2020	2021	2022
Planning Applications (PAs)			
Screening Consultation (Major Projects)	75	69	62
Planning Directorate Consultation	6,393	6,662 (Inclusive of Summary)	6,376 (Inclusive of Summary)
Planning Directorate Re-Consultation	2,312	2,662	2,548
Planning Directorate Consultation Following Material Change	423	438	340
Request for Clearance (Planning Directorate/Planning Commission)	Data not collected	741	830
Consultation (External/pre 2016 cases)	13	10	2
Consultation Following Republishing	7	1	0
Consultation by Board Commission (previously Consultation Following Deferral to Consultees)	116	121	203
Minor Amendment Consultation	562	686	866
Post Decision Consultation	7	3	65
DNO - Development Notification Order	40	96	122
DS - Dangerous Structures	19	9	32
PC - Planning Control	17	46	35
RG – Regularisation	1	-	-
Appeals Consultation	3	-	-
EIA - Environment Impact Assessment	7	22	9
PDS - Project Description Statement	-	1	-
SEA - Strategic Environment Assessment	-	-	-
Heritage Impact Assessments (UNESCO World Heritage Sites)	-	-	-
Development Briefs	1	-	-
Other - Generic Requests	1	-	-
Consultation through Transport Malta electronic online system and through e-mail			
RWP - Road Work Permit	2420	1759	2399

Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee (CHAC)

The Superintendence refers for discussion complex development-related cases to the CHAC. The CHAC is an internal committee within the Superintendence

and makes recommendations to the Superintendence on development-related issues and scheduling/de-scheduling requests. During 2022, the CHAC held 36

meetings, made 178 recommendations on development applications and scheduling/de-scheduling request proposals. The planning applications referred to the CHAC, by the Superintendence, were mainly projects having a major impact on cultural heritage: major

projects, impact on scheduled buildings, demolition, extensive alterations and additions, adverse visual impact, and development applications, impacting on World Heritage Sites.

UNESCO World Heritage Technical Committee (Malta)

The UNESCO World Heritage Technical Committee – Malta (UNESCO WHTC) has been instituted in 2022 as a result of recent changes to the Cultural Heritage Act. The UNESCO WHTC is chaired by His Excellency the Maltese Ambassador to the UNESCO and includes representatives and technical experts from the Ministry responsible for Culture, the Superintendence, the Planning Authority, and ICOMOS (Malta). The Superintendence has regularly referred development-

related cases that may have an impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of ascribed and candidate sites on the World Heritage List to the UNESCO WHTC for discussion. This new process is proving a success and a number of high-profile development applications were significantly revised, re-dimensioned or refused by the Planning Authority on the strength of the recommendations of the UNESCO WHTC in conjunction with the Superintendence.

Environment and Planning Review Tribunal (Planning Appeals)

The Superintendence has dropped both appeals lodged in 2021 with the Environment and Planning Review Tribunal (EPRT), against decisions of the Planning Authority that adversely affected cultural heritage property after the permit holders revised drawings to the satisfaction of the Superintendence. This indicates the enhanced role the Superintendence has successfully built in recent years in the planning decision-making process.

Superintendence has the right to participate as an interested entity in these third-party appeals, in line with the provisions of Article 21 of CAP 551 and has exercised this right in **30** cases during 2022. The Tribunal also requested the Superintendent’s attendance as witness in several cases. The Superintendence notes with satisfaction that its strategy to expand its footprint at the EPRT is leaving a significant positive outcome with decision making by the Tribunal increasingly giving more weight to the role and impact of the cultural heritage values in the planning of our townscapes and rural landscapes.

As a statutory consultee in the planning process the Superintendence regularly receives notification that an appeal has been lodged to the EPRT. The

Test of Reasonableness Board (TORB)

In the past year, the Superintendence started collaborating with the Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability (CPRD) by attending joint inspections and sessions of the Test of Reasonableness Board (TORB) to discuss those cases whereby Access-for-All requirements may have an impact on cultural heritage buildings and features. The results of this

new initiative are exceptionally good with most cases resolved by directing architects and applicants towards solutions that are acceptable to both the CPRD/TORB and the Superintendence. The success of this initiative augurs well for the continued collaboration between these two entities.

Major Projects and Best Practice Cases (Planning Consultations)

Major projects and cultural heritage sensitive development applications are a critical part of the consultations that the Planning Authority refers to the Superintendence. Such projects usually involve a much heavier interaction in terms of time, thought and resources, and include site inspections, research, assessments, and various meetings with stakeholders and the architect/applicant. Below is a list of the main major projects or landmark cases the Superintendence engaged with during the past year (see Table 8).

Table 9: A few of the major projects and best practice cases the Superintendence engaged with in 2022

PA number	Site	Comments
PA 4687/10	Scuttling of the Hephaestus off Xatt l-Ahmar, Għajnsielem	This longstanding application initiated several discussions and scientific studies to identify an ideal location for a new diving wreck off the coast of Gozo. The Superintendence contributed actively to this process to ensure that the scuttling of the vessel does not conflict with the protection and preservation of known and potential underwater cultural heritage assets in the area. The complexity of this case necessitated contribution and synergy from different departments within the Superintendence to achieve the desired results.
PA 8472/19	Ras Hanżir Polverista	This major project involves the construction of a new Cargo Facility and Quay at Ras Hanżir in Kordin. The Superintendence expressed concern because of the possible impacts on neighbouring historic monuments that include the scheduled Grade 1 Knights’ period Polverista, the Grade 2 Guardhouse, the Grade 2 old stone quay as well as the potential underwater archaeology of the surrounding harbour. The project was thus revised to include the restoration of the main scheduled monuments in the area so that the historical significance of this part of the Grand Harbour is retained and all other marine related works including dredging will be subject to archaeological monitoring.
PA 5660/20	Għammieri Experimental Farm, Luqa	The application sought the rehabilitation of a disused historical building of considerable heritage value into office space for the Ministry of Agriculture. The proposal also included alterations and restoration of this building. A significant discussion process ensued between the Superintendence and architect/applicant so that the several traditional architectural features such as double thickness walls, masonry arches, mangers, timber beams and others are preserved. Extensive design changes were successfully carried out to achieve the required level of preservation as directed by the Superintendence and the reverse past illegal interventions whilst rehabilitating this building into a modern functioning office space.
PA 1998/21	Scheduled Building at 30, Triq San Mikiel, Żurrieq	The application sought the rehabilitation and extension to a Grade 2 scheduled house with a formal garden in the Urban Conservation Area of Żurrieq. In addition, this building is located within the scheduled buffer of the Żurrieq <i>Domus Curialis</i> . The building dates to the late 18th century and is characterised by several architectural and traditional features such as vaulted ceilings, a spiral stone staircase, a traditional stone staircase, arches, and roundel windows. The property suffered damage during WWII which explains some of the modern alterations affected in the building. The Superintendence expressed concern at the extents of the original plans which led to a satisfactorily revised proposal that preserved much better the heritage qualities of the building whilst still adapting the building for contemporary use.
PA 3825/21	Pinto/Forni Stores, Valletta Waterfront, Floriana	The original proposal requested extensive intensification of development within this culturally heritage sensitive location with the installation of tables, chairs, canopies, and umbrellas along the offshore quay. Following consultation with the Superintendence and the Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee the project was extensively reduced in scale and volumes to safeguard the visual and aesthetical values of the Grand Harbour and the historical Pinto/Forni Stores.

PA number	Site	Comments
PA 4586/21	Scheduled Building at No.16, Triq iċ-Ċimiterju, Żabbar	The property is a vernacular Grade 2 scheduled building characterised by traditional architectural features and spatial articulation. The open courtyards and low-lying character of this building, and its proximity to neighbouring properties created significant issues of privacy that militated against the proper rehabilitation of this building as a modern dwelling. An extensive engagement between the Superintendence and the client’s architect resulted in the provision of the necessary privacy measures in the form of a contemporary <i>brise soleil</i> which is also reversible and that maintains the character and legibility of the volumes of the heritage building.
PA 7522/21	Townhouse at 104, Triq il-Kbira, San Ġiljan	The project envisaged the extension and rehabilitation of a 19 th century townhouse. The planned works included the demolition of later structures and the construction of an extension within its garden. Initial concerns were expressed at the extent of the original proposal in view of its proximity to the scheduled residence, with its garden and theatre, of the late President of Malta Dr Ċensu Tabone. The proposal was scaled down to respect the neighbouring scheduled property, ameliorated the current situation by screening an extensive third-party blank wall, maintained its axuality – a defining quality of this townhouse – whilst permitting a contemporary extension at the back that respected the characteristics of this fine house.
PA 7820/21	Mgarr Pumping Station, Triq Martino Garces, Għajnsielem	This historical pumping station forms part of a cluster of period buildings that characterise the old core of Mgarr Harbour’s waterfront. It is also an interesting case of an industrial heritage building with significant machinery still in situ. The proposal was for the change of use of the building to cafeteria including the construction of a lightweight mezzanine. The Superintendence engaged extensively with the proposal to ensure that the rehabilitation and the restoration of this building was carried out preserving both its historical value and its original spatial articulation. All the machinery was inventoried and preserved in situ. The result is deemed to be a good balance between the preservation of historical values and modern rehabilitation.
PA 8390/21	Villa Gauci, Triq Santa Monika, Pietà	Villa Gauci, a modernist villa, has now been approved for restoration following opposition by the Superintendence to its demolition in a previous application. Located in a prominent area in Pietà, in the vicinity of the Our Lady of Fatima Parish Church and linked to Casa Gwardamangia’s gardens, Villa Gauci’s cultural heritage and architectural value was deemed to be such that it warrants preservation. This project will ensure the conservation of a significant example of Malta’s modernist architectural legacy.
PA 8706/21	27, Triq ir-Redentur, Żabbar	This planning application proposed the change of use of a disused old office into a shop. The proposal also included minor alterations and the installation of new signage. The Superintendence determined from an inspection of the building that the old office is an historic merchant house office with various associated paraphernalia still extant such as the original timber cashier/office booth, barrels, bottles and boxes. The proposal was revised following direction by the Superintendence to retain the timber office and a sample of the best-preserved barrels were salvaged and integrated as show pieces in the development.
PA 0024/22	Palazzo at Triq San Ġużepp, Birkirkara	This property consists of a superbly internally ornate baroque palazzo in Birkirkara. In addition, the property is probably a multiphase complex with an inner core that may be older than the rest of the palazzo. The application envisaged the restoration of the property and to affect alterations and extensions to adapt this palazzo for modern use. The Superintendence worked in tandem with the project’s architect to achieve an acceptable design that respects the property’s original layout, as well as safeguarding the historic built fabric and the legibility of the architectural features while rehabilitating the property for contemporary use, while also restoring the property.

PA number	Site	Comments
PA 0549/22	Old Post Office/ Townhouse at Triq Manwel Dimech, Sliema	The property is a townhouse with a formal façade and with a significant degree of heritage value that had served as a post-office and was proposed for conversion to a synagogue with ancillary facilities. The interior still preserves substantial architectural spaces, while the rear of the property had been extensively remodelled to serve as a post office in the late 20th century. The initial plans were deemed inappropriate as they would have led to unacceptable changes to the historical façade and to extensive redefinition of the surviving original spaces within the property. The design of the proposed extension was also deemed incompatible with the historical façade. The overall height was not objectionable in view of the high party walls on both sides of the property. The Superintendence engaged with the architect to achieve an acceptable solution which concluded with a suitably revised proposal that conserves all significant ceilings and spaces within the property. The proposed façade has been greatly improved with suitable proportions that maintains the architectural value of the property in its context.
PA 0816/22	Vernacular building at Triq Santa Katerina, Rabat, Malta	This Outline Planning Application sought to establish the parameters for alterations and additions to an existing vernacular building located immediately adjacent to the Knights’ period chapel of St Catherine outside of Rabat. This chapel is of architectural and historic value, and it is included in the National Inventory of the Cultural Property of the Maltese Islands (Inv. No. 2329). The application was initially proposing an extension at first floor that was adversely intruding on significant views of the chapel which was of grave concern to the Superintendence. This volume was removed for the final proposal and limited the sensitive extensions to the ground floor thus preserving the significant views of the chapel.
PA 1141/22	Palazzina at Triq San Nikola, Valletta	The proposal related to alterations to the ground floor of a multi-storey palazzina type of building located just a few meters away from the Grade 1 scheduled church of St. Nicholas. The ground floor is still characterised with historical machinery associated with coffee making and coffee use which will be retained on site. In addition, these artefacts were recorded and are now listed in the national inventory.
PA 1449/22	Marsamxett Lift at San Salvatore Bastion, Valletta	A proposal was made to install a lift within San Salvatore Bastion to connect the city of Valletta to the Marsamxett ferry landing, hence creating a much-needed critical transport nexus between these two points. Extensive discussions were carried out between the Superintendence, the UNESCO World Heritage Technical Committee (Malta) and the Grand Harbour Regeneration Corporation to determine the solution that has the least impact possible, visually and physically, on Valletta and the fortifications. In addition, this section of the fortifications is characterised by a very extensive network of WW2 public air-raid shelters and archaeological remains were discovered at San Salvatore Bastion during an archaeological evaluation of the area. Complex excavation methodologies were approved to ensure the least impact possible on the historic fabric of the fortification wall and the underground shelter complex. The lift cabin was also designed appositely to generate the least visual impact possible on the fortification walls.

PA number	Site	Comments
PA 1977/22	Townhouse at Triq id- Duluri, Hamrun	The original proposal was for the total demolition of the existing townhouse, and its replacement with a five-storey apartment block. The existing building dates to the early half of the twentieth century and forms part of an extensive series of similar houses, sharing common architectural and aesthetical traits along Triq id-Duluri, Hamrun, which however does not form part of the Urban Conservation Area. Revised drawings were submitted following direction by the Superintendence that retain the facades and main halls as well as keeping in situ a historical fountain found at the back of the garden.
PA 3351/22	Vernacular building/ Hunting Lodge, Siggiewi	This is a proposal for the restoration of a traditional historic vernacular building, possibly a hunting lodge, located in the Buskett Area of High Landscape Value. The small size of the property made its rehabilitation as a residence suitable for contemporary living a challenge in terms of cultural heritage. The Superintendence has successfully engaged with the applicant and architect to revise the proposal to safeguard the structure’s significant vernacular values.

6. Built Heritage Monitoring

In line with the provisions of the Cultural Heritage Act, the Superintendence continued its role to monitor the conservation and restoration of built heritage. In 2022, one architect was engaged with the Built Heritage Restoration Inspectorate (BHRI) in lieu of another officer who moved to the Heritage Planning Consultation team as a Senior Officer. The BHRI consists of 6 professional officers, all specialised and conversant in the built heritage and cultural heritage conservation practices, supported by an Administrative Assistant and is supervised by Head of Unit. The BHRI is a stand-alone team that is integrated in terms of management and administration with the Heritage Planning Consultations Unit.

Some officers within the BHRI have also other responsibilities outside the team's remit. These include participating in the European Standards for Conservation and Restoration (CEN standards) and in the European Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science (E-RIHS), and operating the first-aid conservation lab for archaeological artefacts instituted at the Superintendence.

The main business functions of the BHRI are to:

- Provide assistance related to restoration practices of built heritage to the Superintendence;
- Assess and review Restoration and Works Method Statements (RMSs/WMSS) during the consultation stages of the planning development application process;
- Formulate and communicate to the Planning Authority the development permit conditions (including Bank Guarantees) to ensure that the built heritage is safeguarded during development;
- Monitor restoration works. This includes the monitoring of trial patches before cleaning works are commenced and periodical monitoring to ensure works are in line with the approved methodology;
- Provide professional assistance to architects during restoration – for instance when changes to the approved methodology and plans are required;
- Ensure the documentation of updates on progress of restoration projects.

The BHRI is also slowly assuming a strategic role in the conservation of small-scale built heritage monuments that require rapid intervention and mobilisation usually as a result of vandalism, damage, or rapid deteriorating conditions.

Review of Restoration Method Statements/Works Method Statements

Once again, the Built Heritage Restoration Inspectorate saw a decrease in the number of Restoration and Work Method Statements (RMSs and WMSS). In 2022, the combined number of RMSs and WMSS assessed declined by 9% to 1,205 compared to 1,327 in the previous year. The decrease in the number of assessed RMSs probably reflects the reduced number of *Irrestawra Darek* scheme applications for the restoration of Scheduled Grade 1 and Grade 2 buildings and buildings within the Urban Conservation Areas, which is financed and administered by the Planning Authority.

Whilst the number of RMS/WMS submitted for assessment by the BHRI has slightly decreased on year-by-year basis, the number of inspections carried

out in connection with the monitoring or restoration and rehabilitation works within heritage buildings has increased substantially, notwithstanding that there was no increase in human resources. During 2022, the Built Heritage Restoration Inspectorate conducted 2,350 inspections to monitor restoration and rehabilitation works within heritage buildings (including major projects); an increase of 29% when compared to the previous year (1,819 inspections).

The Superintendence processed 243 cases of recommendations to the Planning Authority for the release or withholding of restoration compliance bank guarantees and *Irrestawra Darek* grants, associated with restoration works. This is a decrease of 37% on

the previous year when 386 requests for the release of bank guaranteed and *Irrestawra Darek* grants were processed – which marked a peak for these last 5 years. The decrease in the number of clearances of bank

guarantees and *Irrestawra Darek* grants processed by the Superintendence clearly reflect the decrease in RMs and WMSs processed in 2021 and 2022.

Table 10: Statistics covering 2018 - 2022 in relation to built heritage restoration

	Type of consultation received	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
1	Review of Restoration and Works Method Statement (RMSs + WMSs)	1209	1323	1601	1327	1205
2	Built heritage monitoring site inspections	883	1091	2102	1819	2350
3	Release of Bank Guarantee and <i>Irrestawra Darek</i> Grants	99	335	226	384	243

Surveillance and Enforcement

As part of its regulatory function and in keeping with its role at law, the Superintendence is also responsible to carry out surveillance to ensure the protection of the cultural heritage which may come about:

- By officials of the Superintendence during the implementation of their duties;
- Further to accidental archaeological discoveries made during works carried out that may impact on the cultural heritage;
- In response to third-party reports from the public or police informing of damage (or threat of damage) to the cultural heritage.

Any of the above situations necessitate a site inspection and may require direct enforcement by the Superintendence. Where necessary the Superintendence issues a ‘Conservation and Protection Order’ or a ‘notification to stop works’. Subsequent imposition of conditions or measures to safeguard the cultural heritage may follow. Depending on the nature and circumstances of the infringement, the Superintendence may liaise with the Planning Authority’s Enforcement Directorate, or request police

action.

One (1) Conservation and Protection Order (for the emergency repair of the niche of Our Lady of the Assumption and rural room at *Ta’ Buqana*) issued in late 2020, is now being executed with the intervention of the Restoration Directorate.

The Built Heritage Restoration Inspectorate handled 24 cases in support of the Enforcement Directorate of the Planning Authority and carried out a further 15 cases of enforcement action and/or direct suspension of works (excluding routine suspensions during restoration monitoring) on its own steam. Most of these cases have been concluded satisfactorily except for a few cases where the remedial measures are still ongoing. Several emergencies and infringements were avoided by early detection by the Superintendence’s vigilance, pre-empting damage.

European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) on Restoration and Conservation

The Superintendence of Cultural Heritage continued participating in the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) for restoration and conservation under the aegis of the Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority (MCCA), in 2022. The Superintendence is collaborating with the University of Malta, Restoration Directorate, Planning Authority, and Heritage Malta, in the drafting and compiling of European Standards for restoration and conservation. Together with the other entities, the Superintendence provides its expertise to this international endeavour to achieve a holistic, comprehensive, and unified regulatory framework and common terminology for cultural heritage conservation across the European Union.

The Superintendence collaborated on the following standards for conservation of cultural heritage:

- Investigation and monitoring of archaeological deposits for preservation in situ;
- Specifications for the management of movable cultural heritage collections;
- Finishes of built heritage – investigation and documentation;
- Procedures for the analytical evaluation and selection of cleaning methods for porous inorganic materials used in cultural heritage.

Major Restoration Monitoring

The following major restoration cases are a selection that were monitored by the Built Heritage Restoration Inspectorate during 2022.

Table 11: A selection of major restoration cases that were monitored by the Built Heritage Monitoring Inspectorate during 2022

Site	Locality
Mount Carmel Hospital	Attard
Parish Church	Attard
Notre Dame Gate	Birgu
Auberge d'Angleterre	Birgu
The Farsons Brewery	Birkirkara
Parish Church of St. Joseph the Worker	Birkirkara
Church of St. Francis	Birkirkara
Parish Church of the Virgin Immaculate	Bormla
St John's Cavalier	Cittadella, Gozo
Cottonera Lines	Fgura
Parish Church of the Assumption of the Virgin	Għaxaq
Fort Manoel	Gżira
Lazzaretto	Gżira
Wembley Ice-Cream Factory	Gżira
Parish Church of the Virgin Immaculate	Hamrun
Tas-Samra Church	Hamrun
Parish Church of St. Cajetan	Hamrun

Site	Locality
Isla Land Front	Isla
Porto Salvo Church	Isla
Fort Ricasoli	Kalkara
Parish Church of St. Andrew	Luqa
Parish Church of Maria Regina	Marsa
St. Thomas Tower	Marsascala
Bidni Church	Marsascala
St. Lucian Tower	Marsaxlokk
Il-Mina tal-Gharreqin	Mdina
St. Paul Niche, Telgħa tas-Saqqajja	Mdina
Gomorino Bridge	Mdina
Palazzo Inguanез	Mdina
1, St. Nicholas Street	Mdina
St. Paul’s Cathedral	Mdina
Church of the Virgin of Mount Carmel	Mdina
Church of the Virgin of Lourdes	Mġarr
Mosta Parish Church	Mosta
Oratory Church	Mosta
Basilica of the Assumption	Mosta
Parish Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary	Mqabba
David Bruce Royal Navy Hospital	Mtarfa
Ta' Għaqba Windmill	Naxxar
Junior Ranks Club/Ex-Raffles	Pembroke
Parish Church of St. Sebastian	Qormi
Parish Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary	Qrendi
Aqueduct	Rabat, Gozo
Palazzo Xara	Rabat, Malta
Wied Liemu	Rabat, Malta
Ta’ Buqana Niche and Rural Room	Rabat, Malta
Wied Liemu	Rabat, Malta
Palazzo Xara	Rabat, Malta
Church of St. Mary Magdalene	Rabat, Malta
Parish Church of St. Paul	Safi
Balluta Buildings	San Ġiljan
Barracuda Restaurant	San Ġiljan
Dragonara Entrenchment	San Ġiljan
Dwejra Tower	San Lawrenz
Parish Church of St. Margaret	Sannat
Adelaide Cini Institute	Santa Venera
Romeo Romano	Santa Venera
Parish Church of St. Nicholas	Sigġiewi

Site	Locality
Church of the Virgin of Divine Graces	Sliema
Parish Church of the Annunciation of the Virgin	Tarxien
Bartolott Crypt, St. John’s Co-Cathedral	Valletta
St. Paul Anglican Cathedral	Valletta
Carmelite Priory	Valletta
St. John’s Co-Cathedral	Valletta
Church of the Circumcision of Our Lord (<i>Tal-Ġizwiti</i>)	Valletta
Church of Our Lady, Mother of Jesus (<i>Ta’ Ġiezu</i>)	Valletta
St. Nicholas Church	Valletta
St. Roque Church	Valletta
Parish Church of St. John the Baptist	Xewkija
Parish Church of St. Philip of Agira	Żebbuġ, Malta
Parish Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary	Żebbuġ, Gozo
Wardija Tower	Żurrieq
Church of the Virgin Immaculate, Bubaqra	Żurrieq
Parish Church of St. Catherine	Żurrieq
Various niches around Malta and Gozo	

Best Practice Cases (Restoration Monitoring)

The Superintendence would like to highlight the following examples of best practice restoration which were carried out under the monitoring of the Built Heritage Restoration Inspectorate.

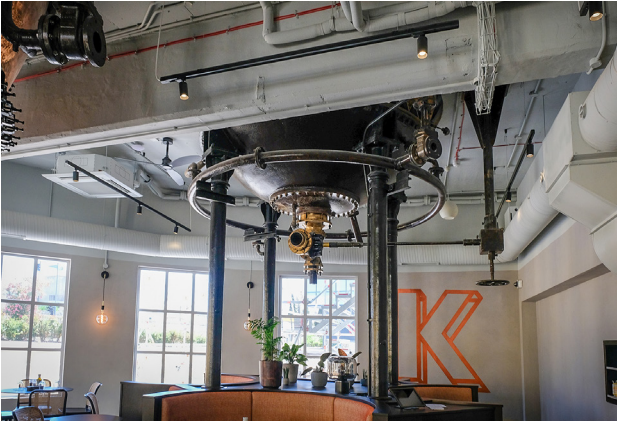
The Brewhouse, L-Imrieħel, Birkirkara

The Brewhouse, formerly known as the Farsons Brewery, was designed by the Maltese architect and civil engineer Lewis V. Farrugia and the Scottish architect William Binnie, and inaugurated in June 1950.

The complex represents one of the most significant milestones of art-deco industrial architecture in the Maltese Islands and is scheduled at Grade 2 for its iconic value. The Brewhouse has been recently refurbished to be used for different purposes and duly restored under surveillance of the Built Heritage Restoration Inspectorate. The restoration works aimed at reinstating the former modernist aspect of the external façade, applying a white velatura, and preserving and restoring the original machinery in



The Brewhouse in Mrieħel, Birkirkara, scheduled at Grade 2.
PHOTO: SCH



Original machinery which has been preserved and restored.
PHOTO: SCH

their exact location. The works were also focused on the external envelope and Portico of the Brewhouse where all damaged concrete has been repaired using materials compatible with the existing substrate. This project was conducted with particular attention to detail, especially considering the preservation of the original blue terrazzo floor finish and the reuse of the old timber and metal doors still featuring the original paint and lettering.

Adelaide Cini Institute, Santa Venera

The Adelaide Cini Institute was founded as the *Istituto Sacro Cuor* in the 19th Century by Adelaide Cini as a residence for girls in need. The project entails the restoration and renovation of the complex into a modern complex to provide palliative care services. The restoration of the facades within the internal courtyard and portico employs a minimum intervention approach to preserve the characteristic time-gained patina and materials of the Institute. The restoration works include the sensitive cleaning of the stone



Restoration works at Adelaide Cini Institute. PHOTO: SCH

surface, the replacement of deteriorated masonry fabric, the consolidation of friable areas, and the re-pointing of the façade. The ongoing project also led to the discovery of previously undocumented World War II shelters underneath the historic complex.

Palazzo Xara, Rabat, Malta

The Palazzo Xara was built at the turn of the 18th Century as the residence of the aristocratic Xara family. The Superintendence has monitored the entire restoration process that involved the cleaning and removal of black crust and oil-based paint, the replacement of deteriorated masonry blocks and sculptural elements, re-pointing of open joints, and plastic repair. The façade's distinctive patina was retained whilst rendering a homogenous aesthetic.



Palazzo Xara – completed restoration works. PHOTO: SCH

Nissen Hut, Ta' Qali, Attard

The new Ta' Qali Crafts Village project included the salvaging and reconstruction of the best preserved Nissen Hut, relocating it to a nearby position and reconstructing it. The structural steel elements and masonry stone were first carefully documented and then dismantled for reuse. All original structural elements were reutilised except for deteriorated

fixtures, which were either replaced with original ones taken from other Nissen Huts (that were approved for demolition to permit the new artisan complex), or else replaced with modern similar material. The internal finishes were kept as minimalistic as possible, thus enabling the structure to be reutilised whilst maintaining the structure's military character.



Nissen Hut Ta' Qali. PHOTO: SCH

Għajn Dwieli Tunnel, Bormla

The Għajn Dwieli tunnel was excavated in circa 1900 within the fabric of the bastions in the vicinity of the then *Porta San Paolo* to service the traffic requirements resulting from the expansion of the Naval Dockyard. The Malta Tramway functioned within the tunnel between 1905 and 1929. The only remnants that still exist within the tunnel of this historic transport means are some ferrous rings embedded in the apex of the *intrados* of the tunnel. The tunnel was recently subject to various



Żurrieq Parish Church Dome following sensitive treatment. PHOTO: SCH



Għajn Dwieli Tunnel and Shaft following restoration works. PHOTO: SCH

works including a general clean-up and restoration of the tunnel itself, including the exterior walls leading to the tunnel, its *intrados*, the shrine contained therein, and the shaft within the bastion. A lot of work involved stone replacement in the said shaft and in the walls abutting the glacis on the Għajn Dwieli side. Other works involved the careful numbering of masonry block work to consolidate the glacis and careful rebuilding of the adjacent walls. The rings pertaining to the Malta Tramway have been carefully extracted from the masonry, and its anchoring widened to allow dowels to be fitted within the masonry to act against any potential rust expansion that would severely compromise the structural integrity of the respective *voussoirs*.

Upgrading of telecommunication antennae from above iconic churches

It has been long felt that telecommunication antennae fixed above the roofs of importance churches should be removed and replaced with improved infrastructure to safeguard the visual sensitivity of these iconic



Żurrieq Parish Church Dome before the telecommunication clutter was removed. PHOTO: SCH



Mqabba Parish Church Dome before the telecommunication clutter was removed. PHOTO: SCH



Mqabba Parish Church Dome following sensitive treatment. PHOTO: SCH

buildings. The improvement is now possible in view of technological advancements in this sector. The Superintendence is coordinating this much needed exercise with various stakeholders, including service providers and parish authorities, to remove unnecessary clutter from such roofs and reduce and replace existing cables with smaller ones when possible. This is an ongoing project with the Superintendence taking the opportunity to improve when the opportunity presents itself.



Mina tal-Gharreqin following restoration works. PHOTO: SCH

Il-Mina tal-Gharreqin, Mdina

Il-Mina tal-Gharreqin consists of an arched opening with a vaulted tunnel within the glacis of Mdina. The external elevation is crowned by an armorial shield of the city's municipality and the figure of St Paul. The gate and tunnel suffered various degrees of deterioration, including black crusts and superficial deposits that resulted mostly from the heavy vehicular movement within the tunnel. Metal inserts present were also manually removed. The lime-based pointing that was then carried out ensured that the tunnel and gate are structurally consolidated, whereas any severely deteriorated masonry blocks were replaced.



Mina tal-Gharreqin during restoration works. PHOTO: SCH



The consolidated stylized Celtic cross on the apex of the spire. PHOTO: SCH

Santa Maria Addolorata Cemetery, Paola

The monumental cemetery of *Santa Maria Addolorata* built on designs prepared by Superintendent of Public Works, Emmanuele Luigi Galizia, is, together with the ongoing restorations of the Cottonera fortifications, one of the most extensive and detailed projects that has been monitored by the BHRI so far. The project has now entered into the delicate phase of treating the Chapel of the Virgin of Sorrows which is considered to be the jewel of the remarkable *camposanto*. The timber roofing has been treated against water ingress while the missing iron and wood elements in the Neo-Gothic structure are being faithfully reproduced. Further work involved the pointing of open joints of the elegant stone spire of the steeple, while consolidation works on the Celtic cross on the apex of the spire manufactured in wood and clad in lead, have also been recently completed. The entire exterior of the chapel including all the missing finials, the aisles, buttresses, and clerestory windows, have been cleaned and lacunae replicated faithfully. The transepts have been accordingly treated while the heavily war-damaged remnants of the stained-glass windows have been consolidated *in situ*. The interior of the chapel has also been addressed, namely the stucco ceiling, which was damaged in many areas due to considerable water ingress over the years. Much of the lost detail has been faithfully replicated and installed *in situ*. The *sotto la cappella* crypt that was used for the sepulchral use of the clergy of Valletta,

Floriana, and the Three Cities, has also been extensively cleaned and treated with the dignity it deserves. Treatment included the pointing of open joints and cleaning of marble plaques contained therein.

Dwejra Tower, San Lawrenz, Gozo

The restoration of the Dwejra Tower at San Lawrenz, Gozo, presently under the custody of Din l-Art Ħelwa, was co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund Operation Programme 2014-2020 and the Malta Tourism Authority. Restoration work included re-pointing, stone replacement, reorganising the window structure

facing the sea, and other minor internal maintenance work. The principle of least intervention was adopted whereby stone replacement was reserved to where absolutely necessary. Instead, the original deteriorated stone blocks were mostly plastic repaired as per best trade practices. In addition, the tower's window to the rear was reinstated and reconstructed to its original form.



Dwejra Tower following restoration works. PHOTO: SCH

Niche of St. Spyridon, Tarxien

The 19th century neo-gothic niche of St. Spyridon is located on the corner of the beautiful townhouse in Tarxien. This niche, which is listed in the National Inventory of the Cultural Property of the Maltese Islands (no. 2038), is the work of a local sculptor named Franku Faure'. Furthermore, the Bonnici family paid Mikiel Busuttil to execute the plan of the neo-gothic niche. The restoration works started with stratigraphic cleaning, which established a polychromatic sequence underneath the then present oil-based white paint. The sequence was properly documented but the state of colour discovered was not suitable to faithfully replicate it. Therefore, after the cleaning process was concluded, it was decided that the niche and statue are to be repainted in a neutral lime-based colour that contributed to define better the intricate details that embellish this feature.



Niche of St Spyridon following restoration works. PHOTO: SCH

Restoration Projects carried out by the Superintendence

Conservation of a Roman period *cocciopesto* floor, Triq Gorg Borg Olivier, Rabat

A Roman period *cocciopesto* floor raised above a plinth, made of large ashlar Coraline Limestone blocks, was



Cocciopesto floor before intervention. PHOTO: SCH

discovered during archaeologically monitored works in Rabat. The discovery is of substantial heritage value that warrants full preservation. A room was constructed to enclose it and emergency consolidation work had to be carried out in view of the fragile state of this flooring, especially at the edges, which were deteriorated.



Cocciopesto floor after intervention. PHOTO: SCH



SCH officers carrying out conservation works. PHOTO: SCH

The conservation works were carried by a warranted conservator-restorer from the Superintendence with

the support of the archaeological monitoring team of the Superintendence. The conservation works involved careful cleaning, the construction of a revetment around the *cocciopesto* floor to consolidate the deteriorated edges, the filling of cracks, and the consolidation of deteriorated *cocciopesto* and underlying bedding layer with a studied lime-based aggregate.

The De Rohan Fountain, Valletta

One of the two fountains erected by Grand Master De Rohan in St. George's Square in Valletta (both of which

are scheduled Grade 1 monuments), was seemingly vandalised. Upon close inspection, the waterspouts and water retention bowl were found covered in a brownish residue. A warranted conservator-restorer from the Superintendence carried out scientific diagnosis and proper documentation prior to the cleaning of the historic fountain. Trial patches carried out after the draining of the fountain from the contaminated water revealed that the substance deposited in the water was an acryl-oil based paint that was highly reactive to pure acetone. Thus, rather than an act of deliberate

vandalism, it is possible that the fountain bowl was inadvertently used to wash tools such as dirty paintbrushes, and other such recipients, from excess paint. A team of conservators from the Superintendence undertook the meticulous cleaning of the sculptural elements (both in stone and lead). Cleaning involved poultice-cleaning to dissolve paint residue trapped in pores, which treatment had to be augmented by careful mechanical manual cleaning in view of paint trapped within the intricacies of the sculptured relief. Minor consolidation and repair works were also carried out to ensure the proper functioning of the fountain.



De Rohan fountain before cleaning works. PHOTO: SCH



SCH officer carrying out cleaning works. PHOTO: SCH



De Rohan fountain after cleaning works. PHOTO: SCH

7. Guardianship of Museums and Sites

Guardianship Deeds of Heritage Buildings and Archaeological Sites

During 2022, the Superintendence finalised the documentation pertaining to the renewal of the Our Lady of Victories Church, Valletta agreement with cultural heritage NGO *Din l-Art Helwa*. The documents were forwarded to the Chief Notary to Government and are awaiting a date for the signature of the deed. No other requests were received in 2022. All Guardianship Deed requests that were pending in 2021 (reference to Table 12 below) were still pending as of the end of 2022.

During the year, the Superintendence has held discussions with Heritage Malta and the Lands Authority with regards to their request for guardianship of the properties currently managed by them, and it was concluded that these may be considered through Entrustment Agreements, as per article 51 of the Cultural Heritage Act. Negotiations, and discussions will continue in 2023.

Table 12: List of requests made to the Lands Authority for which feedback is still pending

Name of Entity	Application type	Name of Cultural Property
1 <i>Din l-Art Helwa</i>	New request	Chapel of San Mikiel is-Sanċir
2 <i>Din l-Art Helwa</i>	New request	Australian Bungalow
3 Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna	Renewal & additions	Saluting Battery & Lascaris War HQ Complex, Valletta
4 Heritage Malta	New request	Tarxien Temples Complex
5 Heritage Malta	New request	Fort Delimara - Fort and Ditches
6 Heritage Malta	New request	Roman Baths
7 Heritage Malta	New request	Auberge de Provence (National Museum of Archaeology)
8 Heritage Malta	New request	<i>Għar Dalam</i>
9 Heritage Malta	New request	<i>Tas-Silġ</i> Archaeological Complex
10 Heritage Malta	New request	Vilhena Palace (National Museum of Natural History)
11 Heritage Malta	New request	<i>Ta' Haġrat</i> Temples
12 Heritage Malta	New request	<i>Ta' Skorba</i> Temples
13 Heritage Malta	New request	<i>Hal-Saflieni</i> Hypogeum
14 Heritage Malta	New request	Kordin III Temples
15 Heritage Malta	New request	<i>Haġar Qim</i> Temples
16 Heritage Malta	New request	<i>Mnajdra</i> Temples
17 Heritage Malta	New request	<i>Domus Romana</i>
18 Heritage Malta	New request	St Paul's Catacombs
19 Heritage Malta	New request	St Augustine's Catacombs
20 Heritage Malta	New request	<i>Abbatija tad-Dejr</i> Catacombs
21 Heritage Malta	New request	Palace State Rooms (Grandmaster's Palace)
22 Heritage Malta	New request	Palace Armoury (Grandmaster's Palace)
23 Heritage Malta	New request	Vendome Bastion (War Museum)
24 Heritage Malta	New request	Inquisitor's Palace
25 Heritage Malta	New request	Fort St Angelo
26 Heritage Malta	New request	Ex-Naval Bakery (Malta Maritime Museum)
27 Heritage Malta	New request	Gozo Museum of Archaeology
28 Heritage Malta	New request	<i>Ġgantija</i> Temples Complex
29 Heritage Malta	New request	<i>Gran Castello</i> Historic House

Name of Entity		Application type	Name of Cultural Property
30	Heritage Malta	New request	Old Prison
31	Heritage Malta	New request	<i>Haġra ta' Sansuna</i>
32	Heritage Malta	New request	<i>Ta' Kola</i> Windmill
33	Heritage Malta	New request	Old Armoury, Nature Museum and offices
34	Heritage Malta	New request	Fougasse
35	Heritage Malta	New request	<i>Madonna del Pilar</i> Chapel
36	Heritage Malta	New request	<i>Borġ in-Nadur</i> Temples
37	Heritage Malta	New request	<i>Ta' Bistra</i> Catacombs
38	Heritage Malta	New request	Auberge d'Italie (MUZA)
39	Ramblers Association of Malta	New request	<i>Il-Miĥna l-Qadima</i> / Jesus of Nazareth Windmill
40	Gabriel Caruana Foundation	New request	<i>Ta' Ganu</i> Windmill / <i>Il-Miĥna tal-Maħlut</i>
41	Heritage Malta	New request	<i>Torri tal-Kaptan</i>
42	Din l-Art Helwa	New request	Qbajjar Battery / <i>It-Torri tal-Qolla l-Bajda</i>
43	Heritage Malta	New request	<i>Torri San Luċjan</i>
44	Din l-Art Helwa	New request	<i>Razzett tax-Xitan</i>
45	Din l-Art Helwa	New request	<i>Il-Palazz l-Aħmar</i> / Wied Musa Battery

Status of Guardianship Deeds

Table 13 below shows the status of the signed Guardianship Deeds up till the end of 2021.

Table 13: List of signed guardianship deeds as at end 2022

Name of Cultural Property		Locality	Name of Guardian	Year of Signature
1	<i>Qalet Marku</i> Tower	Naxxar	Din l-Art Helwa	2003 / Renewed 2013
2	<i>Għallis</i> Tower	Naxxar	Din l-Art Helwa	2003 / Renewed 2013
3	Red Tower / Santa Agatha Tower)	Mellieħa	Din l-Art Helwa	2003 / Renewed 2013
4	Wignacourt Tower	San Pawl il-Baħar	Din l-Art Helwa	2003 / Renewed 2013
5	Mamo Tower	Marsaskala	Din l-Art Helwa	2003 / Renewed 2013
6	Santa Maria Tower	Għajnsielem	Din l-Art Helwa	2003 / Renewed 2013
7	Dwejra Tower	San Lawrenz	Din l-Art Helwa	2003 / Renewed 2013
8	Santa Maria Battery	Għajnsielem	Din l-Art Helwa	2003 / Renewed 2013
9	Msida Bastion Cemetery	Floriana	Din l-Art Helwa	2003 / Renewed 2013
10	Lascaris War Headquarters Complex	Valletta	Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna	2009 / renewal in progress
11	Couvre Porte Barracks at Vittoriosa (10 rooms at lower level) and underlying WWII shelter	Vittoriosa	Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna	2011 / renewal in progress
12	Our Lady of Victory Church	Valletta	Din l-Art Helwa	2011 / renewal in progress
13	Wied Iż-Żurrieq Tower	Qrendi	Din l-Art Helwa	2013
14	Fort Rinella	Kalkara	Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna	2016

Name of Cultural Property		Locality	Name of Guardian	Year of Signature
15	Madliena Tower and adjacent structures, Room off Mediterranean Street and Bridge and Weir	Pembroke	Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna	2016
16	Tower at Triq il-Wiesgħa	Xagħjra	Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna	2016
17	Three World War II Pill Boxes: Reserve Post R15 (Naxxar), AB1 Beach post (Mellieħa) and RAO beach post (Kalkara)	Naxxar Mellieħa Kalkara	Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna	2016
18	Notre Dame Gate	Vittoriosa	Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna	2016
19	St Thomas Tower	Marsaskala	Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna	2016

8. Other SCH Responsibilities

Bord tal-Warrants tar-Restawraturi

Due to administrative changes affected during 2022, an officer within the Heritage Planning Consultation team acts as registrar to the *Bord tal-Warrant tar-Restawraturi* (henceforth the *Bord*). As the registrar, it handles most administration support duties to the *Bord* including:

- Handling all communication with applicants;
- Handling general queries from applicants/non-applicants;
- Preparing information material for publication;
- Assisting the *Bord* in its functions, including interview with applicants;
- Attending *Bord* meetings;
- Organisation and presentation of all data;
- Vetting of applications.

Following the processing of applications by the Registry on behalf of the *Bord*, 4 applicants were granted the warrant to practice the profession of Conservator-Restorer, in 2022. In addition, this year, the *Bord* has issued the applications for the registration of persons having a Heritage Skill as per Article 32(2) of the Cultural Heritage Act. These skills include the application of a heritage trade or craft, knowledge, custom, art, technique, and skill, as have been developed and safeguarded, whether through tradition or instruction, and having a conservation context. Upon the successful consideration of the *Bord*, the person will be registered as having one or more Heritage Skills.

OCTAI – An MDIA Financed Project

The Superintendence has excitingly embarked on a Government-financed project through the Malta Digital Innovation Authority (MDIA) with *Spazju Kreattiv* (St James Cavalier) and with the technical support of CultureVenture (a private company) to utilise Artificial Intelligence (AI) to forecast visitors' behaviour and attendance in a historic environment utilising *Spazju Kreattiv*/St James Cavalier, a scheduled Grade 1 historic monument, as an example. The scope is to create a model that can be transferred and adapted to any other historic environment which is open to the public.

The AI combines results from the use of technology (such as infra-red sensors) and survey replies to create an algorithm that predicts visitors' behaviour in real time. A separate survey was conducted concurrently by *Spazju Kreattiv* inside the building. These results are then combined to obtain predictions of visitor's behaviour in real time to permit *Spazju Kreattiv* to affect changes in its operations that addresses the outcome of these results. This project is now in its final stages with the final analysis of results and conclusions planned to take place in the first quarter of 2023.

Governing Committee – Electronic Vehicles Charging Infrastructure (MEEE)

The Superintendence has actively participated throughout 2022 in the inter-governmental committee for the Electronic Vehicles Charging Infrastructure headed by the Ministry of the Environment, Energy and Enterprise (MEEE). This Committee is entrusted with the steering of the rolling of this critical national infrastructure. The Superintendence's role

is primarily to advise where and how charging points can be installed without affecting cultural heritage assets such as historic centres and the surrounding buildings, and areas of archaeological importance. The Superintendence also advises on issues of the design and installation requirements of certain charging points in order to safeguard issues of cultural heritage.

Advice to Government and Entities

The Superintendence also provided valuable policy guidance to Government and public entities in the cultural heritage sector, replied to Parliamentary

Questions, and provided feedback to investigations by the Ombudsman.

Register of Cultural Heritage Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

The compilation of a register for Non-Governmental Cultural Heritage Organisations stems from Article 7(5) (m) of the Cultural Heritage Act. At the beginning of 2022, the Superintendence sent out invitation letters to non-Governmental cultural heritage organisations asking them to enrol in said register. In order to be eligible to form part of the register, the NGOs had to satisfy a number of criteria, including having a certificate of enrolment by the Commission of Voluntary Organisations, as per the Voluntary Organisations Act, and having as part of their objective, the promotion of

cultural heritage.

The Superintendence received several application forms from various NGOs which were vetted, as per eligibility criteria listed above. The final list was then referred to the Minister responsible for National Heritage for approval. By the end of the 2022, a total number of 34 non-governmental cultural heritage organisations were included in the Register. The Superintendence will continuously be updating said Register as per legal obligations.

European Research Infrastructure for Heritage Sciences (E-RIHS)

E-RIHS mission is to deliver integrated access to expertise, data, and technologies, through a standardized approach, and to integrate world-leading European facilities into an organisation with a clear identity and a strong cohesive role within the global heritage science community. <https://erihs.gov.mt/>

The E-RIHS-Malta project is being led by Prof. JoAnn Cassar, Head of the Department Conservation and Built Heritage at the Faculty of the Built Environment obo the University of Malta. The Superintendence of Cultural Heritage supported the E-RIHS project from inception way back in January 2019, when Prof. Cassar introduced the concept and the potential of the project, to stakeholder entities. Prof. Cassar is also the Malta official Representative on the E-RIHS Interim General Assembly.

The joining of Malta as a full member in E-RIHS was possible through the support and financial contribution for the membership fee by the Ministry and the office of the Permanent Secretary.

The E-RIHS-Malta coordinators carried out various related tasks, meetings, reviewed drafts, and submitted comments in preparation of local and pan-European requirements and deliverables, mainly:

- Signed a Memorandum of Understanding for E-RIHS Malta national Node between 10 entities;
- Launched the E-RIHS Malta website;
- Participated in the E-RIHS Interim General Assembly and several related meetings; and
- Held the first E-RIHS Malta national Node Steering Committee.

The E-RIHS Malta coordinators and the Maltese entities partners in the E-RIHS National Node will be following up the E-RIHS project in 2023.

9. Public Outreach



This year again, in its role as National Coordinator for European Archaeology Days and European Heritage days, the Superintendence sought to organize and invite agencies and organisations to organise events

European Archaeology Days

The European Archaeology Days are celebrated across Europe and coordinated by the National Institute for Preventive Archaeological Research (INRAP) in France. The EADs are celebrated annually in June. The Superintendence is the National Coordinator for EADs and seeks to mark this special day on the cultural calendar by ensuring that events are held locally to raise awareness of the richness of Malta's archaeological resources. The first coordinated events were held in 2019. In celebration of the 2022 edition of European Archaeology Days, the Superintendence put together a digital catalogue of oil lamps discovered locally which was made available online. Additionally, scheduled social media posts were put up during

European Heritage Days

European Heritage Days is a programme coordinated jointly between the European Commission and the European Union. Malta was one of the countries that participated in EHD events when they were first organised in 1985 - and has done so intermittently



European Heritage Days 2022. PHOTO: SCH

in conjunction with these two celebratory events. The Superintendence also participated in the EHD National Coordinators meeting virtually in view of ongoing Covid-19 restrictions abroad.

the EAD weekend, where archaeologists from the Superintendence spoke about an artefact of choice and its significance. This digital format has proved to be popular in an ever-fast society, since it brings a service directly to one's mobile phones. Moreover, Heritage Malta once again collaborated in this year's EADs by organising a number of events including a public lecture reading about urban archaeology and a collection of fine tableware dating back to the 17th and 18th century, tours of the Domus Romana and *Ta' Bistra* Catacombs (which are not usually open to the public), as well as a sunrise performance in celebration of the Summer Solstice at *Mnajdra* and *Haġar Qim*.



European Heritage Days 2022. PHOTO: SCH

Freshers' Week Events

In 2022, the Superintendence, for the first time, participated in Freshers' Week held in various educational institutions such as Gian Frangisk Abela



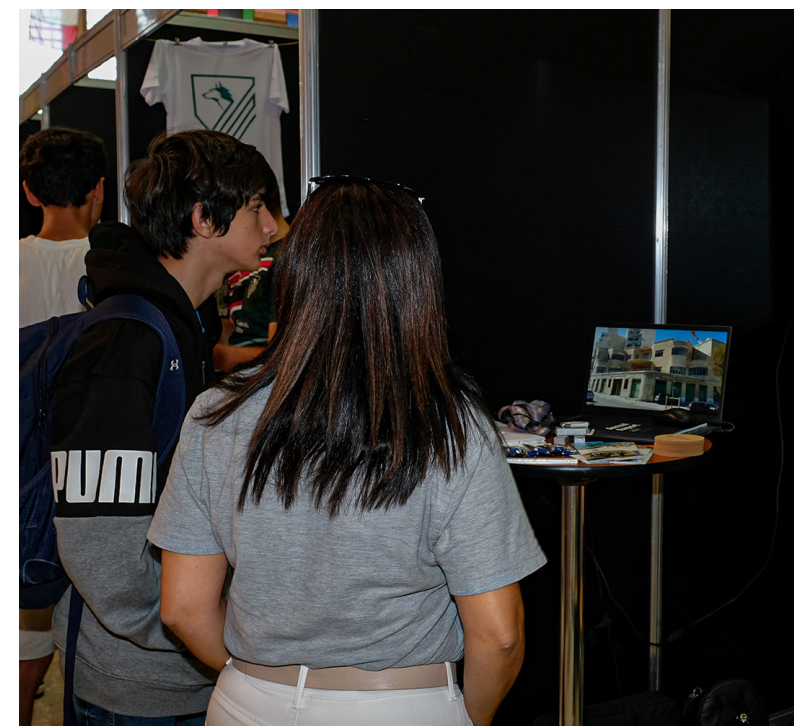
Freshers' Week at Higher Secondary. PHOTO: SCH



Freshers' Week at MCAST. PHOTO: SCH

theme which was *Sustainability*. The events included a small exhibition with artefacts from an archaeological excavation the Superintendence had directed in 2022 in close proximity to the Centre together with a number of talks, as well as live analysis of human remains carried out by SCH osteologists. A number of activities aimed specifically for children were also organised. The Superintendence is happy to note that there has been an increase in interest in the organisation of events not only by Heritage Malta, the National operator of Museums and sites, but also by a number of NGOs, such as SKALI Gudja, Agones SFC and Battlefront Living History Group, who have brought an interesting mix of events which vary from reanectments to a run along the Historic Victoria Lines.

Junior College, MCAST, and Giovanni Curmi Higher Secondary School. The Superintendence set up a stand in each of these educational institutions. Officers from the Superintendence, with various educational backgrounds, provided information to students about the work carried out by the Superintendence and also provided an insight about what career opportunities are available in the cultural heritage sector.



Freshers' Week at Junior College. PHOTO: SCH



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