Welcome to Ullapool Museum

You are now in the Grade A1 listed former Parliamentary Church which has housed Ullapool Museum since 1995.

The building was designed by the engineer Thomas Telford, and was built in 1829. It is unique as the only Parliamentary Church still standing that remains true to its original design in both the building and the interior. It contains the only surviving gallery, and the decor and fittings are original. The church itself closed in 1935.

In 2012 Ullapool Museum launched the 'Saving Thomas Telford' project, and the museum closed for a year of complex renovations. The project aimed to preserve and protect Telford's iconic design, and culminated in the sensitive renovation of the building.

Restoration of the Museum in 2013

Volunteers working on the extensive restoration of the Museum in 2013

Ullapool Museum Trust has cared for and restored this unique piece of Scotland's heritage with great support from various funding bodies.

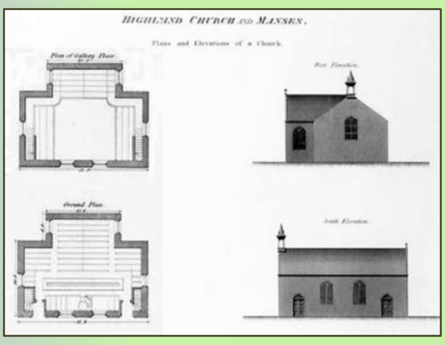
In addition to the renovation of the structure and fabric of the building, the interior renovation has been extensive. Our team of dedicated volunteers has made significant contributions of time and skill.

Thomas Telford (1757–1834)
by Henry Raeburn 1803
Courtesy National Museums Liverpool.

'Parliamentary Churches' were erected in the early 1800s. It was decided by Government that additional places of worship were needed in thinly populated and scattered parishes in Scotland.

The eminent Scottish civil engineer Thomas Telford was commissioned to design a standard plan for the building of 32 Churches and 43 Manses. These were to be 'particularly calculated to resist a stormy climate'.

There are features common to all the Telford kirks. There is always a basic rectangular floor plan, the same shape and positioning of doors and windows, and a small belfry. Most also have an extension to the rear making the plan T-shaped.



Telford's surveyor was William Thomson. His detailed plan was adopted throughout the Highlands with some alterations. This simple basic rectangle allowed local architects to make amendments to suit local circumstances.

James Smith was the architect who oversaw the works at Ullapool.

LISTED BUILDINGS IN THE HIGHLAND REGION

TITLE: Ullapool Argyle Street former Ullapool Parish Church and Burial Ground.

DISTRICT: Ross & Cromarty

MAP REFERENCE: NH 127 942

PARISH: Lochbroom Parish

PHOTOGRAPHED: 19.10.83

CATEGORY: A

Thomas Telford, 1829. Plans and specifications by James Smith. Standard Parliamentary T-plan church; coursed squared rubble, harled flanks and rear; contrasting tooled ashlar dressings. Depressed arched outer doors in south elevation with similarly detailed paired windows in centre bays with standard cast-iron 2-light, latticed glazing. Similar windows in end gables and in east and west elevations of T-wing. Standard bellcote at west gable apex; slate roof.

Interior; plain galleried interior. Burial ground; pair squared dressed rubble gate piers with capes; coped drystone wall.

Disused. James Smith, architect, also acted as contractor. Quoad Sacra parish of Ullapool disjointed from Lochbroom in 1833.

REFERENCES: Thomas Telford, Biographical Atlas (1838) pp 58-9. The New Statistical Account, xiv, p67. Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanae, ix p.664. Howard Colvin, A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1600-1840, (1978) p.821.

The Ullapool Museum Trust raised a considerable sum, much of it from local donations, sponsorship and fundraising events.

Historic Scotland and the *Heritage Lottery Fund* made considerable grants to the restoration, recognising the uniqueness of this Grade A1 listed building.

The Highland Council and other grant giving bodies contributed further.

Lochbroom's local community rallied to the cause raising funding through activities and events, and continues to work towards funding needed to carry on further renovation.

The work of dedicated *volunteers* continues to support and underpin all the fundraising, maintenance and renovation activities.

Historic Scotland | Supported by The National Lottery® through the Heritage Lottery Fund | Le taic bhon Chrannchur Nàiseanta tro Mhaoin-Dualchais a' Chrannchuir | The Highland Council / Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd | Fargher-Noble Trust | Ullapool Harbour Trust