



Belfast: Beyond Convention
Overview Agenda – 23rd – 26th October 2025

Thursday, 23rd October

Early arrival – day at leisure – we can suggest activities (at your own expense). Several suggestions follow in this document.

Early arrivals can join David Langan and Donna Marsh for drinks and dinner

18.00 Pre-dinner drinks

Venue: Revolución de Cuba, 25-39 Arthur St, Belfast BT1 4QG.

www.revoluciondecuba.com This venue is about a 10 minute walk from Academy Restaurant. At your own expense.

19.45 Informal Dinner – At your own expense: £45 excluding beverages

Venue: Academy Restaurant, Ulster University, York St, Belfast BT15 1ED

www.academyrestaurant.co.uk – This restaurant is also an educational centre, with a tasting menu created by students from locally sourced ingredients. They choose the menu; however, dietary considerations are accommodated.



Giant's Causeway



Titanic Museum



Belfast City Hop On Hop Off Bus Tour



Revolución de Cuba



Academy Restaurant

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Friday, 24th October

Morning Conference meeting at the Clayton Hotel

08.30 Welcome and housekeeping – David Langan and Donna Marsh

09.00 Guest Speaker – ‘Understanding Northern Ireland from its formation to the present’: Professor Dominic Bryan, Professor of the School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics, Queens University Belfast

10.00 TCC Speaker – ‘My TCC Story - Discover the World - Discover yourself – Discover what’s important beyond the destination’: David Langan, TCC World Traveller ‘330’

Conference tour

11.30 Departure to Stormont

12.15 Lunch, Members’ Dining Room, Northern Ireland Assembly, Stormont

14.00 Guided Tour of the Northern Ireland Assembly

15.30 Departure to return to the Clayton Hotel

16.30 At leisure

19.00 Pre Pub Dinner Drinks downstairs with Irish music

Venue: Morning Star Gastro Pub, 17-19 Pottinger's Entry, Belfast BT1 4DT.

Included in the TCC attendance fee excluding beverages.

19.45 Pub Dinner – private space upstairs on the first floor.

Venue: Morning Star Gastro Pub, 17-19 Pottinger's Entry, Belfast BT1 4DT.

Included in the TCC attendance fee excluding beverages.



Clayton Hotel – Titanic Conference Room



Northern Irish Assembly –
Stormont Estate and Parliament Building



Members Dining Room
Northern Ireland Assembly, Stormont



Morning Star Gastro Pub

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Saturday, 25th October

Morning conference at Clayton Hotel

09.00 Welcome back and housekeeping

09.30 Guest Speaker – ‘Falkland Islands - Travel and Real Life - Past, Present and Future’: Dr Jim McAdam, FOTBOT (Friends of the British Overseas Territories). Dr McAdam will also touch on Tierra del Fuego

10.30 TCC Speaker – 'Working Through the Troubles: A first hand account of working in Northern Ireland in the 1980s': Richard Elliot, TCC UK & Ireland

Conference tours

12.00 Leave for Tour of Belfast from both a Republican & Unionist perspective

12.30 Packed lunch – picnic in a park, weather permitting

13.00 Visit to the Irish Republican History Museum

Note: We will make brief stops at the mural walls near both museums

15.00 Visit the Museum of Orange Heritage

16.00 Departure to return to the Clayton Hotel

17.00 At leisure

18.30 Pre-dinner drinks – bar, Grand Central Hotel, 2nd floor opposite the Seahorse restaurant

19.30 TCC Gala Dinner – Important Note: smart casual dress code

Venue: Seahorse Restaurant, Grand Central Hotel, 9-15 Bedford Street, Belfast BT2 7FF. www.grandcentralhotelbelfast.com/seahorse/



Irish Republican History Museum



Museum of Orange Heritage



Seahorse Restaurant
Grand Central Hotel

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Sunday, 26th October

All day conference tours

08.30 Depart from the Clayton Hotel to Hillsborough Castle and Gardens
guided tour - visit the residency of the British Royals when in Northern
Ireland

11.30 Depart for Crumlin Road Gaol, Belfast

12.30 Lunch – Cuffs Bar & Grill, Crumlin Road Gaol (at your own expense)

13.30 Guided Tour of Crumlin Road Gaol, aka HM Prison Belfast, in
operation from Victorian times until 1996

15.00 Guided Tour of McConnell's Distillery, in business since 1776, adjacent
to Crumlin Road Gaol

16.30 Return to Clayton Hotel

16.45 At leisure

19.00 Informal dinner for anyone remaining in Belfast on Sunday evening
(at your own expense) Venue TBC



Crumlin Road Gaol



McConnell's Distillery

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A Bit About Northern Ireland and The Troubles

There are multiple perspectives about the history of Northern Ireland. We do not promote any specific perspective, political or social position. We strongly encourage you to research your own interests in further detail. These links will simply get you started.

<https://www.theirishroadtrip.com/the-troubles/>
<https://www.history.com/news/the-troubles-northern-ireland>
<https://www.theirishstory.com/2017/10/28/the-1798-rebellion-a-brief-overview/>
https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/empire_seapower/irish_reb_01.shtml

Some useful definitions and terms:

Map and simplified definition of the UK:

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is comprised of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Great Britain includes England, Wales and Scotland, but not Northern Ireland. Great Britain was created with the Acts of Union in 1707. The United Kingdom was created in 1922, concurrent with the Anglo Irish Treaty and Constitution, which also formally established the independent country of the Republic of Ireland.



Some basic terms relevant to Northern Ireland:

Politics and social commentary is complicated in Northern Ireland. The purpose of this information is to provide a starting point. Be aware that almost everything is nuanced and contextual regarding Northern Ireland.

DUP – The Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) has been the dominant political party in recent years promoting a loyalist position with the United Kingdom. After a series of scandals, it lost control to Sinn Féin in 2024. There are other loyalist and unionist political parties in Northern Ireland.

First Minister of Northern Ireland – The Northern Irish Assembly is the devolved government of Northern Ireland and is located in Stormont. The First Minister of Northern Ireland is the leader of the Northern Ireland Government. This position is currently held by Michelle O'Neill, who is also the Vice President of Sinn Féin

Good Friday Agreement – Reached in 1998, the Good Friday Agreement, also known as the Belfast Agreement and the British-Irish Agreement formalised the end of the violence known as The Troubles. It also addresses a multitude of political, social and cultural issues.

IRA – The Irish Republican Army (IRA) has existed in various forms from before the creation of Northern Ireland to modern times. The IRA's positions are aligned with republican beliefs.

Loyalist – a position of remaining loyal to the United Kingdom. Loyalist beliefs are usually associated with Northern Ireland Protestants.

Nationalist – a belief of a united Ireland

Orange Order – an organisation aligned with loyalist beliefs

Republican – a belief of a united Ireland, including Northern Ireland. Republican beliefs are usually associated with Northern Ireland Roman Catholics.

Sinn Féin – Sinn Féin is a political party promoting a republican position of the unification of Northern Ireland with the Republic of Ireland. It has been the largest political party in the Northern Ireland Assembly since 2023. There are other republican and nationalist political parties in Northern Ireland.

The Troubles – a series of conflicts in Northern Ireland, often violent, that took place mostly between the end of the 1960s and 1998. They were generally drawn along ethnic and religious lines, which can arguably be traced back to the early 1600s with the arrival of English and Scottish settlers. The Troubles have subsided, especially since the implementation of the 1998 Good Friday Agreement.

Ulster – one of the four provinces of the island of Ireland, made up of nine counties. These include the six counties that comprise Northern Ireland with the remaining three counties part of the Republic of Ireland. The term Ulster can be used in various contexts.

Unionist – similar to loyalist, a position of remaining loyal to the United Kingdom

Citizenship

People born in Northern Ireland are generally eligible to claim citizenship of the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, or both, subject to a number of usual conditions. Many people with ancestors from Northern Ireland to include but not exceed grandparents may also be eligible to claim citizenship of both countries. It is also possible for non-UK and non-Irish citizens to naturalise with the same rights, subject to stringent conditions. This unique situation has been stipulated in the Good Friday Agreement.

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Useful Links – 23rd – 26th October 2025

Useful links, things to do:

Thursday, 23rd October

First timers to Belfast may wish to consider:

- the Titanic Museum, <https://www.titanicbelfast.com>
- the Ulster Museum <https://www.ulstermuseum.org>
- Belfast Black Taxi Murals Tour <https://belfasttours.com/tours/belfast-political-mural-tour>
- City Tour Hop On Hop Off Bus <https://www.hop-on-hop-off-tickets.com/belfast-bus-tours/>
- a day trip to Giant's Causeway, <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/northern-ireland/giants-causeway>
- Game of Thrones Studio Tour <https://gameofthronesstudiotour.com>
- Petrolheads and Back to the Future fans may wish to visit Delorean

Friday, 24th October

More information about today's tour:

- Ireland Assembly, Stormont <https://www.niassembly.gov.uk>

Saturday, 25th October

More information about today's tours:

- Irish Republican History Museum <https://eileenhickeymuseum.com>
- Belfast murals <https://belfast-murals.co.uk/#>
- Museum of Orange Heritage <https://www.orangeheritage.co.uk>

Sunday, 26th October

More information about today's tours:

- Hillsborough Castle and Gardens tour <https://www.hrp.org.uk/Hillsborough-Castle/>
- Crumlin Road Gaol Tour <https://www.crumlinroadgaol.com>
- McConnell's Distillery <https://intl.mcconnellsirishwhisky.com>

Belfast: Beyond Convention

Need to know – 23-26 October 2025

Useful information, logistics:

Getting to Belfast:

By air: There are two airports serving Belfast

Belfast International Airport – flights from Great Britain and much of continental Europe on easyJet and Ryanair

Belfast City George Best Airport – mostly flights from Great Britain on Aer Lingus, British Airways, easyJet and Loganair. We recommend this airport.

By ferry:

Stena Line <https://www.stenaline.co.uk/> run services from two ferry ports between Great Britain and Belfast. Ferries depart from Cairnryan in Western Scotland and from Liverpool (Birkenhead) in the Northwest (England).

Manx Ferries <https://www.manxferries.com> run a service between Douglas on the Isle of Man and Belfast as well as from Douglas to Great Britain (Heysham, Liverpool, Birkenhead) and to the Republic of Ireland (Dublin).

By train:

Irish Rail <https://www.irishrail.ie/en-ie> and Translink <https://www.translink.co.uk> run frequent service between Dublin and Belfast.

By bus:

Bus travel is usually faster and less expensive than the train, especially if booked in advance. Dublin Express <https://www.dublinexpress.ie> and Aircoach <https://www.aircoach.ie> both offer frequent services to Belfast.

Getting around Belfast:

Belfast is a very walkable city. If you plan to walk, do remember to bring an umbrella and waterproof clothing.

Uber does operate in Belfast but wait times can be long outside the city centre. To our knowledge, Bolt, Lyft and Ola do not operate in Belfast.

Taxis: We recommend

- Belfast Cabs +44 7446 014761
- fonaCab +44 28 9033 3333
- Value Cabs +44 28 9080 9080

Although taxis can be hailed on the street, it is advisable to book your journey in advance. Please note that some but not all taxis will accept bank cards.

The bus system in Belfast is comprehensive, reliable, frequent, and inexpensive. It is possible to travel on the entire Belfast area bus system for £5 per day. For more information, visit: <https://www.translink.co.uk>

Conference Centre:

Clayton Hotel, Titanic Room <https://www.claytonhotels.com/belfast/>

The hotel is in a convenient location in central Belfast.

Hotel Recommendations:*High End (5*):*

Grand Central Hotel <https://www.grandcentralhotelbelfast.com>

Hilton Hotel <https://www.hilton.com/en/locations/united-kingdom/belfast/>

Merchant Hotel <https://www.themerchanthotel.com>

Upper Mid-range (4):*

Clayton Hotel <https://www.claytonhotels.com/belfast/>

Europa Hotel <https://www.europahotelbelfast.com>

Maldron Hotel <https://www.maldronhotels.com/belfast-city/>

Titanic Hotel <https://www.titanichotelbelfast.com>

Budget – Mid Range (up to 3):*

Premier Inn <https://www.premierinn.com/gb/en/>

ibis Hotel <https://all.accor.com/booking/en/ibis/hotels/belfast-uk>

Airbnb, Vrbo and similar homestays and short term property rentals are available in Northern Ireland

REGISTRATION FORM

TCC Member Name	
TCC Guest (if applicable)	
Member's TCC Chapter	
Mobile phone and WhatsApp number (with country code)	
Member's email	
Attendance Dates: Friday-Sunday -or- Friday - Saturday	
Food allergies and other considerations: Is your diet: Vegetarian? Vegan? Gluten free? Lactose intolerant? Halal? Kosher? Anything else?	

Important notes:

Attendance is capped at a maximum of **50 attendees**. If we reach the maximum number, we will start a waiting list.

The agenda can be subject to minor changes. The cost to attend the conference and all included activities is expected to be **£285.00**. We will finalise the agenda and this figure before 31st March 2025.

We recognise that some members may not be able to attend all activities on Sunday. If this applies to you, then the cost to attend Friday and Saturday conference and activities only is expected to be £195.00.

Deadline to RSVP is 31st May 2025. We encourage you to RSVP as soon as you are able to.

Deadline to pay in full is 31st August 2025. We encourage payment prior to the deadline if possible.
Payments are fully refundable until the deadline. We will not be able to make refunds after this date.

Payment must be made by bank transfer. We will provide bank details when we receive your RSVP. We can also advise attendees how to make this payment if it is not something you are familiar with.

Included activities:

Conference attendance on Friday morning, 24th October, and Saturday morning, 25th October. The conference will have coffee, tea and water available.

Afternoon tours on Friday, 24th October and Saturday, 25th October

Morning and afternoon tours on Sunday, 26th October

Transport from the Clayton Hotel to each of the above tours and return to the hotel.

Lunch and dinner on Friday and Saturday*

*Alcoholic beverages are at the members' own expense.

The visit to the distillery does include product tasting. If you wish to taste beyond the tour, this will be at your own expense.

Excluded activities:

Transport to Belfast

Transfers to and from either Belfast airport, train station, or ferry port

Local transport other than to and from the published tours

Accommodation. We can provide a discount code for booking the Clayton Hotel (limited availability)

Activities on Thursday, 23rd October including dinner are at the member's own expense.

Lunch and dinner on Sunday, 26th October are at the member's own expense.

Alcoholic beverages are the members' own expense.

For more information, please contact

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