After graduating in Architecture and practising as a chartered architect for a few years, Allan moved into town planning and then did a one-year post-grad Urban Design course while based with Essex County Council as a historic buildings adviser.

Allan joined Derbyshire County Council’s Design and Conservation section in 1980 as historic buildings architect and quickly became involved with the Trust as one of several local government officers supporting the Trust through its Technical Panel. Following nomination as a Trustee in 2011 , he took over from Dr. Pat Strange as Chairman of the Technical Panel until its closure following the Trust’s re-organisation.