

Scotland's Historic Environment Forum (SHEF)

Dynamic Earth, Edinburgh, 29 June 2022

Event Report

Introduction

Historic Environment Scotland (HES) has been commissioned by Scottish Ministers to lead a review of Scotland's historic environment strategy, [Our Place in Time](#), and to develop a refreshed strategy in collaboration with stakeholders and partners for the next 5 to 10 years.

The 29 June SHEF event marked the launch of the strategy review process. Delegates from across Scotland gathered at SHEF at Dynamic Earth to discuss the changed context since Our Place in Time was published in 2014, and share ideas on the future focus and priorities for the revised strategy.

Further engagement activity will take place over the Summer and a draft of the new strategy will be published for public consultation in Autumn 2022.

Following consultation, the new strategy will be published in March 2023. It will build upon the success of OPiT and prioritise activity that supports recovery and renewal, creates a more resilient and sustainable historic environment sector, and enhances the contribution the sector makes to Scotland and its people.

Event overview

Hosted by Historic Environment Scotland and the Scottish Government on behalf of Scottish Ministers, SHEF was held in person at Dynamic Earth, Edinburgh. There were 114 attendees on the day (list of organisations is supplied in Annex A).

The first plenary session was livestreamed over the HES YouTube channel and included a welcome from Dr Hugh Hall, Chair of HES, an address from Mr Neil Gray, Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development, and Minister with special responsibility for Refugees from Ukraine, a series of lightening talks by a panel of speakers, and an open discussion involving the audience that was moderated by Caroline Clark, Director of National Lottery Heritage Fund (Scotland). The recording of the livestream is available at <https://youtu.be/SS4HAKhFvf8>.

The plenary was followed by breakout discussions on the following themes:

- Economic recovery, resilience and sustainability
- Climate emergency, Net Zero and environment
- Education, skills and young people
- Community and tackling inequalities

Attendees (online and in person), contributed questions, commentary and feedback interactively via Sli.do throughout the day.

Attendees were also encouraged to use the hashtag **#OurPlaceInTime** on social media channels. A [Twitter moment](#) was generated capturing some of the key tweets from the event.

The full event programme, including speakers, can be found at Annex B.



Dr Hugh Hall, Chair of Historic Environment Scotland, welcomes all delegates to the Scotland Historic Environment Forum on 29 June 2022, at Dynamic Earth, Edinburgh.
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Plenary session – summary

Dr Hugh Hall, Chair of Historic Scotland, welcomed delegates to the event. Dr Hall highlighted the success of *Our Place in Time* since publication in 2014, the contribution of the historic across a broad range of policy areas represented by the individuals and organisations in the room, and the challenges facing the sector and Scotland.

Neil Gray MSP, Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development and Minister with special responsibility for Refugees from Ukraine, delivered the opening speech. He observed that Scotland has a diverse and impressive wealth of heritage and culture that we must never take for granted. Our heritage assets require collaborative action to ensure they remain protected and sustainably operated for future generations to enjoy. Mr Gray highlighted the importance of partnership and collaboration and the positive impact OPiT has had on the awareness and perceptions of historic environment priorities both within and outside of the sector. However, the strategic context has changed considerably since OPiT was published. We need to prioritise activity that supports recovery and renewal, and focus on creating a more resilient and sustainable sector. We also need to communicate the historic environment's positive contribution to the economy, wellbeing, and Net Zero.

Mr Gray spoke of the importance of each of the breakout themes, giving examples of activity in these areas, he referenced traditional skills, the Heat and Building Strategy, the inspiring example by the community on the Isle of Gigha, and the significant economic contribution the sector makes. He highlighted the Scottish Government's commitment to being a good global citizen, and the recent resource spending review that will support efforts to make Scotland an open and welcoming

Scotland's historic environment. She asked "whose place and whose time is being framed in your work and in this new strategy for Scotland? And how can this strategy use a human rights based approach to be transformative for Scotland?". Delegates were asked to think about people, place and power and ask themselves who "controls the purse strings", how we can adopt a participative rights-based intersectional approach, and empower people who experience multiple deprivation to name and claim their rights. Clare highlighted that this is an exciting time for Scotland with a raft of human rights legislation coming that will place new duties of public bodies. Referencing the 13th Century Sufi poet, Rumi, she urged the sector to be bold, creative, and inclusive in participation and listening to create the next strategy so that it becomes notorious for embedding communities' voices and human rights at its heart.

Dr Ben Twist, Director, Creative Carbon Scotland, argued that the new strategy should be built around climate change and that climate change should not just feature on 'page 37'. The historic environment is directly threatened by climate change and there is a need to act now before it is too late, or it becomes too expensive to do so. The historic environment has opportunity to champion climate action and Net Zero. Climate change has greatest impact on most marginalised parts of society and is a human rights issue. The new strategy should also provide the framework and justification for letting things go that cannot be protected or preserved – we cannot save everything. It should set out a realistic approach, provide leadership to take difficult decisions, and help us manage change.

Lawrence Durden, Tourism Sector Manager, Skills Development Scotland, covered key drivers behind skills agenda such as demographic change with shrinking working age population, slowing population growth, Industry 4.0, changing nature of work (hybrid, remote working, digital), and Net Zero goals. Challenges identified included the scale of upskilling and reskilling required, the transition to Net Zero, current labour shortages that are anticipated to remain for the next few years, attracting new talent to the sector, fair work, and the equality, diversity and inclusion.

Ailsa Macfarlane, Director, Built Environment Forum Scotland, started with the observation that so much has changed since 2014 – climate change, COVID-19 impacts, economic changes – suggesting that against this backdrop of change the sector has learnt that it can move faster than previously thought and that the collective voice is stronger in garnering support. She highlighted that the process of developing the new strategy is important and that it should aim to do more and be more than its predecessor. Collaboration, innovation and transparency should be important to the new strategy. "Heritage doesn't matter" to many people, instead they might care more about skills and employment, about their local places and people, or about climate change. Ailsa also highlighted that the purpose of historic buildings have changed and can change over time, and that we should be open to considering future changes in purpose. A new OPiT should focus on delivering benefits and relatable outcomes and explaining the historic environment's value not accumulating artefacts.

There followed a discussion involving speakers and the audience which was supported by Sli.do. The Sli.do questions are summarised at Annex C. The discussion highlighted:

- The historic environment's connections with other sectors and/or policy and the importance of cross-sector partnership and collaboration to generating better solutions and demonstrating the value of the historic environment.
- Historic buildings and traditional skills/materials are key to our net zero ambitions, with a creative approach we can, for example, demonstrate the value of retrofitting instead of creating new buildings.
- A shortage of (traditional) skills is a threat to the future of our historic environment, but also an opportunity to attract new talent into the sector.
- A need to question and diversify the stories that we tell and focus on people's stories. Participatory approaches, empowering local communities, increasing the range of groups we engage with and creating safe spaces for conversations will help to welcome more voices into the historic environment sector.
- Priorities like climate action and human rights need to be embedded in everything we do, rather than seen as stand-alone priorities.



The panel and open discussion identified shared priorities such as the need for collaboration across sectors to focus on climate action, human rights and promote traditional skills.

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Audience during the open discussion session at Scotland's Historic Environment Forum on 29 June 2022 at Dynamic Earth, Edinburgh. ©Historic Environment Scotland

Breakout discussions – summary

There were nine facilitated breakout discussions covering four thematic areas:

- Economic recovery, resilience and sustainability
- Climate emergency, net zero and environment
- Education, skills and young people
- Community and tackling inequalities

Discussion was structured around addressing four main questions:

*What has changed for you and your organisation since OPIT was published in 2014?
(context)*

What are the key things you or your organisation are trying to achieve? (priorities)

What challenges or barriers do you face? (challenges)

*How could Scotland's historic environment strategy help you or your organisation
achieve your goals? (opportunities)*



Delegates joined nine breakout groups to discuss priorities, challenges and opportunities for the historic environment at Scotland's Historic Environment Forum on 29 June 2022 at Dynamic Earth, Edinburgh. ©Historic Environment Scotland



Word cloud generated from the post-it notes gathered during the breakout room discussion at Scotland's Historic Environment Forum on 29 June 2022 at Dynamic Earth, Edinburgh. ©Historic Environment Scotland

A synthesis of responses to questions on priorities, challenges and opportunities is provided in the table below by theme:

Economic recovery, resilience and sustainability	
Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community wellbeing • Responsible and regenerative tourism • Telling the stories • Affordability • Funding mechanisms for innovation and investment • Joint planning • Diverse heritage communities and digital offerings
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding engagement • Lack of real time data and information • Expectations of different stakeholders • Silo working, complex interdependencies • Making bold decisions • Long term thinking
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local place plans • 20-minute neighbourhoods • Community buy-outs and asset transfer • Better, broader collaboration beyond heritage • Promote local - artisans, business, stories, heritage • Joining up natural, cultural and built heritage policy and funding plans • Tourism taxation legislation as a vehicle for funding historic environment

Climate emergency, net zero and environment	
Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Net zero versus fuel poverty • Just transition • Standards for social housing • Key focus on maintenance rather than change • Half the loss of biodiversity by 2030 within a changing climate • Work across silos • Raise the profile and awareness of historic environment as a solution or at least part of the solution
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical, legal, financial, and practical barriers • Culture change around maintenance • Funding and finances, such as VAT for maintenance and repair • If no money at government level how will maintenance and measurement be funded • SAP EPC (Standard Assessment Procedure Energy Performance Certificate) reforms • Profile of adaptation to climate change too low • Lack of skills to undertake repairs
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentivise re use of embodied carbon in existing buildings • Momentum and focus after COP26 • Bring back repair grants for all property not just historic

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better homes for people through retrofits and energy efficiency strategies • Green jobs for young people and others • Engage with new agricultural land management support mechanisms
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Education, Skills and young people

Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More expectation to deliver upskilling activity and flexible learning • Diminishing funds to do high-cost education programmes leading to less hands-on learning lots of work ongoing • Increase in requirement for digital skills • Focusing on work-based learning and apprenticeships • Diversity and inclusion how we attract retain and support a more diverse workforce and volunteers, increasing push towards seeing education only in terms of employment and economic earning • Looking at entry points and not end points for skills development – no further on then we were in 2014
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills shortages and people leaving industries – attracting talent from a shrinking labour pool • Demographic time bomb caused by impact of Brexit • Diminishing funding for higher education and further education • Diminishing support on time and primary and secondary schools for arts and humanities • Balancing training and education within the push for skills • Poor recruitment practices in the sector • Move to remote and online working may impact skills transfer • Breaking linear track mindset and education – recognise that most people entering education will now go through multiple career shifts
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting sharing and celebrating fair work in the sector • Structures working groups which facilitate actions – learn from OPiT failures • Critically reflect on what the issue on skills is it does not simply a shortage of courses understanding and responding to young people’s career aspirations • Harnessing a new post-COVID way of working • Identify options for upskilling people quickly to meet changing demands • Do something to better articulate the value of craft skills • Sustainability and Net Zero attracting younger and diverse workforce • Review the way we engage with young people – change the message

Community and tackling inequalities

Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the barriers to participation and actively seek to address them via funding • Using a human rights-based approach • Support apprenticeships and placements which open opportunities for diversity
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create space and opportunities for challenging conversations around race and heritage social privilege • Connecting to opportunities and partner organisations to tackle key issues that are important to them e.g., cost of living, inclusion, poverty and transport • Collaborating with partners to create a platform for and empower young people to have a say in governance and strategic decision making from an informed perspective • Better representation in the sector from excluded groups such as low income, disabled and BAME
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating the right conditions for those not always heard to engage in strategic priorities in the sector • Honest conversations around history need safe spaces to create change • Intersectionality of inequality • Inclusion requires money, know-how and expertise • Better representation from community – cost of living • Resources and economic pressures • Boards and committees and heritage sector remain stubbornly un-diverse • Political will and systemic barriers • Confidence to change • Focus on older people too where is their voice? • Increased wealth inequality, marginalised are more marginalised • Skills shortages
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrating more culture and heritage as identified by communities • Defining the Scotland we want – debate around referendum can open this • Service design approach – involve people in co-creation • Actively employ people from communities – targeted intervention • Charity and grassroots grant support not costly • Use network and groups to build links – matchmaking groups • Measure the inclusion and quality impacts and communicate them publicly • Create easy to use tools e.g., coproduction blueprint that enables our sector to improve • Allow appropriate costs within budgets to support inclusion e.g., food, childcare, travel as well as and as importantly as the heritage costs • Making historically unsafe spaces for women and minorities safe

Next Steps and closing remarks

Alex Paterson, CEO of Historic Environment Scotland, closed the event thanking the speakers, delegates and event team for their contributions to a successful morning that marked the start of review process. The ideas and insights from the event will be explored and tested over the next few months in a series of planned engagement events that will take place across Scotland. He also observed that the new strategy would be built on the solid foundation provided by the current strategy and be

informed by work already undertaken by the sector, key stakeholders and partners to identify challenges, opportunities and priorities. Delegates were encouraged to follow progress on social media and to get in touch directly with review project team directly using hashtag and email address below.

Conclusion

This event marked the beginning of a programme of engagement activity to inform the review of OPiT and the drafting of a revised sector strategy for Scotland's historic environment. The views and ideas generated and shared by speakers and delegates will be explored and tested over the summer.

In August and September, HES will be hosting further strategy workshops, in person and online, including in person events in Dumfries, Inverness, and Aberdeen advertised through Eventbrite (<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/hes-32576247593>). There will also be some tailored engagement with specific groups and audiences. BEFS will also be hosting a series of in person and virtual engagement workshops over during August and early September to provide as many opportunities as possible for individuals, organisations and communities as possible to participate in the strategy review process.

In the autumn, the draft of the strategy will be published on Citizen Space for public consultation for 12 weeks. We will share the link with you once the consultation goes live. The public consultation will be running for 12 weeks from October 2022 until January 2023.

We also encourage individuals and organisations keep an eye out for news on HES's website www.historicenvironment.scot, to follow and use the hashtag #OurPlaceInTime, or contact us and share their views directly by email contacting the email address externalrelations@hes.scot.

Annex A – Organisations attending SHEF on 29 June 2022

Archaeology Scotland
Architectural Heritage Fund
Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland
Arts and Business Scotland
Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers UK
BE-ST
Built Environment Forum Scotland
Centre for cultural value
Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
Church of Scotland
Cities & Local Growth Unit Scotland
Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights
Community Enterprise Scotland
Creative Carbon Scotland
Creative Scotland
Culture Counts
Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre
Edinburgh World Heritage
Glasgow City Heritage Trust
Glasgow Life
Glasgow School for Business & Society
Heritage Alliance
Heritage Trust Network
Highlands & Islands Enterprise
Historic Churches Scotland / Heritage Trust Network
Historic Environment Scotland
Historic Houses Scotland
Inclusion Scotland
Keep Scotland Beautiful
Making Rights Real
Museums Galleries Scotland
National Galleries Scotland
National Library of Scotland
National Lottery Heritage Fund
National Trust for Scotland
NatureScot
Optimat
Planning Aid Scotland
Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland
Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors
Royal Town Planning Institute
Scotland's Regeneration Forum

Scottish Canals
Scottish Civic Trust
Scottish Council on Archives
Scottish Federation of Housing Associations
Scottish Government
Scottish Strategic Archaeology Committee
Scottish Traditional Building Forum
Skills Development Scotland
Society of Antiquities Scotland
Stirling City Heritage Trust
True North Innovation
University of Stirling/Universities Scotland
VisitScotland
Volunteer Scotland
Wardrop Consulting
West of Scotland Regional Equality Council
YoungScot

Annex B – Agenda

Opening Plenary

09:30 – 09:35 Introduction and event housekeeping – Alison Turnbull, Director, External Relations and Partnerships, Historic Environment Scotland

09:35 – 09:45 Welcome – Dr Hugh Hall, Chair of Historic Environment Scotland

09:45 – 10:00 Opening Address – Neil Gray MSP, Minister of Culture, Europe and International Development and Minister with special responsibility for Refugees from Ukraine

10:00 – 11:15 Introduction by moderator to open session on *What should a refreshed Our Place in Time strategy look like?* Followed by 5-min lightening talks from 5 speakers, followed by open discussion involving speakers and audience.

- Caroline Clark, Director, Scotland, National Lottery Heritage Fund (panel moderator)
- Aidan Grisewood, (Interim) Director of Economic Policy, Scottish Government
- Clare MacGillivray, Director, Making Rights Real
- Dr Ben Twist, Director, Creative Carbon Scotland
- Lawrence Durden, Tourism Sector Manager, Skills Development Scotland
- Ailsa Macfarlane, Director, Built Environment Forum Scotland

Mid-Morning Break

11:15 – 11:45 Mid-morning tea/coffee

Discussion Groups

11:45 – 12:45 Breakout discussion group sessions

- Economic recovery, resilience and sustainability
- Climate emergency, Net Zero and environment
- Education, Skills and young people
- Community and tackling inequalities

Closing

12:45 – 13:00 Next Steps and Closing remarks - Alex Paterson, CEO, Historic Environment Scotland

Lunch

13:00 – 14:00 Networking lunch to bring SHEF to a close

14:00 SHEF close

Annex C – Sli.do Questions and Analytics

24 questions were raised in total (2 were comments).

Top rated questions raised by participants

1. "Linking the economy, climate change and equalities themes - most of the required adaptations will need to be undertaken by private citizens. There isn't enough public funding available to make this happen - should the sector be calling for government to incentivise change through the tax system?" (11 likes)
2. "Given that the spending review has outlined a landscape where for many sectors funding is likely to be flat or declining over the next five years - what can we agree to stop doing in order to do more of the things we are identifying as new priorities. This is often overlooked and agreement is needed" (10 likes)
3. "We talk about having a "mindset to innovate" but is the sector ready to innovate when so much of it is volunteer run and is looking for some solid foundation skills around Business Planning, Fundraising, Marketing to enable them to simply operate towards resilience?" (8 likes)

Other questions in order of rating:

Aidan - Fairness/Well-being, how can we ensure the ethical sourcing of stone, so those processing stone (anywhere in the world) have a positive working environment including compliance with the findings of the Fair Work Convention's findings in the construction industry.

OPIT in 2014 estimated £600m spent annually on pre1919 buildings. A building needs to be wind & watertight to be energy efficient but 71% of Scotland's pre1919 homes aren't (Scottish Housing Condition Survey). How can we change home-owners' priorities so they address the condition of their homes?

Have we now successfully 'mainstreamed' heritage?

Our place in time has had several successes, but where has it failed to deliver the change hoped for? Do we understand the reasons for those failures, and will the next strategy include actions to mitigate against some of them? e.g. why have some of our aims in inclusion not yet been met?

Lawrence, in light of the skills shortage how are school and college curriculum adapting to meet skills gap in terms of heritage skills needed. Additionally in response to the working population how will continuous education for reskilling be achieved to meet future requirements in an agile manner?

Regarding skills - how do we avoid duplication of effort across different organisations, universities and colleges? Is there over provision regarding some skills development that could be redirected to other areas? How do we support organisations facing labour shortages to give people time to train?

Measuring the intangible - how far can the strategy support and inform primary research into understanding the way we can demonstrate and describe impact of our actions.

We often talk about skills in relation to jobs but less so in terms of the skills needed to be a 'good' citizen and to engage with society (including heritage) in a confident and respectful manner - this includes knowledge and understanding of art, philosophy, critical thinking etc.

If a people have a right to culture and heritage and the SG recognises its value, can we stop spending so much time, money and effort on 'proving' impact and focus more time, money and effort on understanding how to create the maximum value(s) from what we do? Claire - UN Global Goals? How do we actualise these and get beyond the rhetoric?

Ben - absolutely agree on climate change centrality but are we not handicapping ourselves by maintaining the false nature/culture dichotomy? The Historic Environment is not just buildings and it is also not just 'communities'. Scotland in its entirety is an historic environment.

Aidan have you thoughts on how the new our place in time strategy can help HES focus on community wealth building & community wellbeing - maximising quality of life and economic benefits. Also what the implications are for HES's operational and organisational culture?

@lawrence Durden. Negative perception of the sector - would be good to hear where the evidence base / data set is for this and a few words more as to what you understand are the primary elements. Thanks

The economic and social value of heritage, and hard work/investment needed to sustain it is not universally appreciated by decision makers & investors. How central should this be in OPIT?

What hope of a more supportive UK fiscal policy - VAT removed from repair and retrofit?

Will there be support for community ownership of historic churches, surplus to current owners' requirements, protecting them from transfer into holiday homes, AirBnB, second homes?

Inclusivity can often involve negotiating different values, leading to conflicts that need to be sensitively managed. It can also be constrained by pragmatic issues around resources and time. How do we support people to make these difficult decisions at every level without fear of harsh judgement?

What are the fixed points in time around which to develop outcomes?

Today marks the 22nd anniversary of Christine Foster’s death at Ryan’s Bar. Is the panel confident such an incident won’t happen again?

Ailsa's comment about Benefits is spot on. The strategy must focus on how the 'artefacts' can be exploited for the benefit of local communities in areas of Scotland where there are social and economic challenges. There needs to be a cultural shift of attitude to support local initiatives.

Comment. Funders need to be involved in understanding this complex system and everyone needs to think about how systems create outcomes.

Word cloud based on participant questions:

As per below, the most common word among the 24 questions was “skills”, followed by “support” and “change”. We are discounting “time” as a false hit.

