



PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK REPORT 2020-2021



HISTORIC
ENVIRONMENT
SCOTLAND

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ALBA

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INTRODUCTION

This Report details the planning performance of Historic Environment Scotland (HES) from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. It sets out our role in the planning system and gives an update on our ongoing work to secure positive outcomes for the historic environment.

We have prepared the Report in line with the requirements of the 'Key Agencies Group Model' for the Planning Performance Framework Review Reports. Using this model, we have demonstrated how we have performed against the agreed Performance Markers for 2020-21, and described our contribution to the planning system under the following themes:

- Placemaking
- Capacity building
- Service
- Service improvements

The Report gives both quantitative and qualitative evidence of our performance and highlights the impacts that the Coronavirus pandemic has had on our work and service delivery.

We have four teams who lead our planning engagement role – Planning, Consents and Advice, Heritage Management Policy, Designations and Business Support. All four teams sit within the Heritage Directorate. Our key aim is to promote consideration of the historic environment at all stages of the planning process.

Key areas of our work include:

- providing advice within the planning system
- regulating works on scheduled monuments
- supporting the development of national plans, programmes and strategies
- designating new sites and places, and reviewing existing designations
- producing historic environment policy and guidance
- monitoring activities related to our works
- actively engaging with and training stakeholders, owners and communities
- sponsoring awards to promote high quality development
- providing advice via Design Review Panels and grant aid applications
- supporting works for the conservation and management of historic assets and places

The significant challenges of this year have affected every area of our work. Much of the staff in our Designations team were furloughed, and we also had to make procedural changes to enable designation decisions to be made digitally. This affected our performance against targets in this work area. Despite these challenges, we were able to push forward with our programme of business improvement, making the designation process more transparent and easier to engage with.

We have continued to exceed our planning and consents target of dealing with 90% of regulatory activities, consultations and decisions within required timescales. We continue to work on ensuring our decisions are open, transparent and easy to understand.

ABOUT HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND

We are the lead public body established to investigate, care for and promote Scotland's Historic Environment.

- We care for more than 300 sites of national importance all across the country and are the largest operator of paid visitor attractions in Scotland.
- We look after internationally significant archives and artefacts.
- We are at the forefront of investigating and researching the historic environment and addressing the impacts of climate change on its future.
- We protect our historic places through designations and consents, promote their sustainable development, and provide millions of pounds each year to local communities to repair and revitalise their historic environment.
- We provide advice and guidance about the historic environment, and offer a wide range of training and learning opportunities.
- In every aspect of our work we strive to follow our five organisational values – we are collaborative, professional, innovative, open and respectful.

We want the historic environment to make a real difference to people's lives. A difference to our health, to our economy, to our culture, to our environment. We want heritage to involve everyone so that we all benefit. Our Corporate Plan, [Heritage for All](#), sets out our vision and priorities from 2019 onwards.

Our vision is that the historic environment is cherished, understood, shared and enjoyed with pride, by everyone.

These are the five outcomes that we want to achieve and that will help us realise our vision:

1. The historic environment makes a real difference to people's lives.
2. The historic environment is looked after, protected and managed for the generations to come.
3. The historic environment makes a broader contribution to the economy of Scotland and its people.
4. The historic environment inspires a creative and vibrant Scotland.
5. The historic environment is cared for and championed by a high-performing organisation.



WHAT WE DO IN THE PLANNING SYSTEM

The Heritage Directorate leads our work in the planning system, coordinating the wide range of relevant skills, knowledge and expertise available across HES. This Report focuses on the work of our Planning, Consents and Advice Service, Heritage Management Policy Team, Designations and Business Support Team. These teams, in consultation with others when appropriate, carry out most of our planning related activities.

The aim of our work in the planning system is to inform and enable good decision-making, so that the historic environment of Scotland is valued and protected.

Our Designations Team compiles and maintains lists of nationally important historic buildings, archaeological sites and monuments, gardens and designed landscapes and historic battlefields. They also advise Scottish Ministers on the designation of historic marine protected areas.

Our Planning, Consents and Advice Service provides advice on the potential impacts of development on the historic environment. This advice is often linked to our statutory functions relating to various planning and consenting processes. These include listed building consent and conservation area consent, and our role as regulator for scheduled monument consent. We are also a consultation body for developments requiring an Environmental Impact Assessment.

Our new Heritage Management Policy Team leads on strategic planning matters and ongoing development and implementation of heritage management policy and guidance. They also provide advice on the development of planning policy and strategies, and engage with strategic stakeholders and communities on the management of the historic environment. This includes supporting regional and local development plan preparation and acting as a Consultation Authority for Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Our Business Support Team co-ordinates our planning and consenting processes, liaising with applicants and decision-making bodies to ensure we are consistent and on time.



The fishing vessel graveyard at Findhorn Bay contains the remains of at least 30 Zulu-type sail-powered fishing drifters used in the late 19th and early 20th century in connection with the commercial herring fishery on the northeast coast of Scotland. The remains were protected as a scheduled monument in July 2020.

OUR STAFF

The Planning, Consents and Advice Service, Heritage Management Policy, Designations and Business Support Teams are specialists with knowledge of architectural history, archaeology, planning and environmental assessments. We employ 76 members of staff within the four teams.

Planning, Consents and Advice Service	
Head of Service	1
Deputy Head of Service	6
Senior Officer	17
Officer	5
Field Officer	6
Graduate Trainee	1
Casework Support Officer	1
Team total	37
Designations Team	
Head of Designations	1
Deputy Head of Designations	3
Senior Designations Officer	6
Designations Officer	8
Designations Support Manager	1
Designations Support Officer	3
Designations Support Assistant	1
Team total	23
Heritage Management Policy Team	
Head of Heritage Management Policy	1
Deputy Head	1
Senior Officer	3
Officer	1
Team total	6
Business Support Team	
Head of Business Support and Improvement	1
Casework Technician	4
Business Support Assistants	5
Team Total	10
TOTAL	76

OUR DECISION-MAKING

Decision-making processes are standardised across the Planning, Consents and Advice Service, Heritage Management Policy and Designations Teams, underpinned by a set of sign-off and quality control procedures. We publish our detailed [schedule of governance](#) for decision-making for designations and casework online.

EFFECTS OF COVID-19

In light of the Covid-19 outbreak facing Scotland and the world, we have revised our workplan for the immediate future. This addresses the direct impact of the outbreak on our organisation, to ensure that we maximise the resources still available to us to contribute to our Corporate Plan and the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework.

This year we published two six-monthly action plans to reflect the changing circumstances. Our [latest action plan](#) was published in October 2020. The quantity, frequency and nature of our work changed throughout the year, reflecting economic pressures and ongoing changes in lockdown restrictions.

All staff in Planning, Consents and Advice and Heritage Management Policy worked from home throughout the year. Significant restrictions on movement have impacted our ability to safely undertake site visits. Service improvement targets were also impacted.

The service was maintained throughout the year. To do this, staff had to adapt to deliver advice and consents from information submitted digitally, with site visits only being undertaken in exceptional cases.

Around two thirds of our Designations Team were furloughed in April and May 2020 due to the significant impacts of lockdown on their ability to work. This included insufficient mobile IT equipment to allow all staff to work remotely. Since then, all staff have worked from home, reprioritising designations casework to focus on cases which can be delivered without site visits. Working practices were adapted so that many more cases can now be progressed without site visits, and changes to our processes meant that our service can continue remotely.

RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Covid-19 has had a dramatic impact upon all our lives. This includes direct and immediate impacts to how we work, live and socialise. More fundamental is the impact Covid-19 has had accelerating changes in our environment. For example, our town centres have been a focus for our communities for generations, and as a result are often rich in heritage. Before the pandemic the decline of retail activity and changes in employment opportunities was already impacting on the character and condition of town centres, resulting in buildings and spaces, many of heritage significance, becoming vacant and derelict to the detriment of the viability and vitality of a place. Covid-19 has accelerated this rate of decline.

Our focus for the year ahead is to continue to engage with Scottish Government, local authorities, communities and other partners, principally in supporting the implementation of the cross-cutting objectives of NPF4 and the expected revised Town Centre Action Plan. This will be achieved by seeking further opportunities for the sustainable use, re-use and adaptation of heritage assets as part of the reimagining of our town centres.



INNOVATIVE SERVICE DELIVERY IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

Dunollie Castle, near Oban, Argyll was once the centre of Dál Riata, one of the Gaelic Early Medieval kingdoms of what is now Scotland. It controlled the safe anchorage at Oban Bay and access between the western islands and routeways into mainland Scotland. In the fifteenth century the MacDougalls marked the re-establishment of their power in Lorn with the erection of the current tower and courtyard.

Over the last eight years we have worked closely with the owners of Dunollie Castle, the MacDougall of Dunollie Preservation Trust, on a long term project to consolidate the remains. When complete, the owners will be able to open the castle again and use it for events. This will allow the monument to contribute to local regeneration and Oban's tourism offer.

In 2019 [we granted scheduled monument consent](#) for a third phase of consolidation works at the castle. The work was supported by a grant from the [Historic Environment Repair](#)

[Grant Scheme](#). Works were disrupted due to Covid 19 and although works eventually resumed, stonemasons had to operate under strict social distancing rules. Key decisions still had to be made to enable the project to move forward and the works reviewed prior to completion and payment of grant.

Normally we would make several visits to site in order to understand issues as they arose and to sign off the works for consents and grants purposes. Due to Covid restrictions, this was not possible. Instead, we held a remote meeting with only the lead mason on site, who presented the works through live video feed. This allowed for a full review and discussion to take place.

This approach enabled full service delivery to be maintained despite Covid restrictions. The works were adequately reviewed, enabling the consent and grant to be delivered. The works were later reviewed by site visit once restrictions lifted, and this confirmed the high standard of the completed works.



PERFORMANCE MARKERS

This report uses narrative, statistics and case studies to demonstrate how HES achieves positive outcomes in the historic environment against agreed performance markers. These are grouped under three broad headings: Placemaking, Capacity Building and Service.

PLACE-MAKING

A. STRATEGIC PLANNING

Participation in national and strategic plan-making helps us to achieve shared outcomes. By contributing to these plans, we help to protect and conserve the historic environment for the enjoyment, enrichment and benefit of everyone, now and in the future.

We provide advice and information to support the development and delivery of a broad range of national plans, policies and strategies. For example, in [our response to the Draft Infrastructure Investment Plan](#) we advocated for our historic environment to be recognised as playing a key role in a sustainable future. We emphasised that looking after what we already have and maintaining existing buildings is often greener than building new. This will be crucial for Scotland's net-zero targets and supporting Scotland's Green Recovery following the Covid-19 pandemic.

We offered advice on key questions arising from the Position Statement for Scotland's [Fourth National Planning Framework](#) (NPF4) and other planning changes being taken forward by the first phase of the Programme for [Extending Permitted Development Rights in Scotland](#). We have also advised on the need for recognition of the role of culture and the historic environment as a powerful tool in improving outcomes for island communities in our response to the development and delivery of Scotland's [Third Land Use Strategy](#).

Our responses to these national consultations are on our website:

- [Position Statement for NPF4 response](#)
- [Programme for Extending Permitted Development Rights response](#)
- [Scotland's Third Land Use Strategy response](#)

We have continued to take relevant plans, policies and strategies into account in the contributions we make and advice we give as part of the planning process. This includes our input to the preparation of development plans, our advice on development management decisions, and our work in developing our own policies and guidance in support of a plan-led system.

PLANNING REFORM

Throughout the past year and despite the setback arising from Covid-19, work on the [Implementation Programme](#) for the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 has continued. We have supported this in a number of ways.

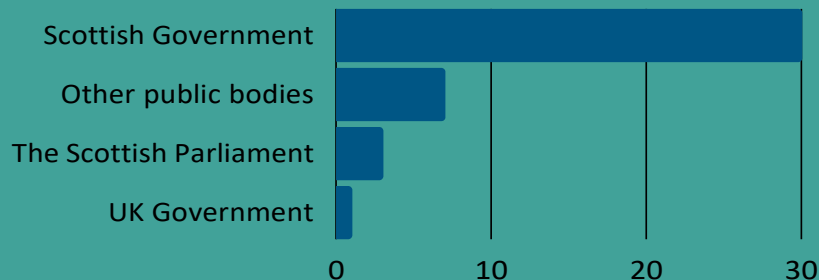
This legislation brings with it various changes to the operation of the planning system and in due course will go on to influence how policies for decision-making are updated and applied. We have continued to offer advice and evidence on these changes and look forward to working with Scottish Government and others as reforms to the planning system are implemented in the coming year.

This includes the ongoing preparation of a fourth [National Planning Framework](#) (NPF4) which will incorporate Scottish Planning Policy. Most recently, in response to the Position Statement we supported the direction of travel and offered comments on a number of topic areas. This included the key role that the care and maintenance of our existing assets will play in a sustainable future, and the delivery of climate change targets. We also emphasised the positive effects that our historic environment can have for health and wellbeing and have been providing advice on how development management policies within Scottish Planning Policy could be incorporated and reflected within NPF4.

We have also considered the impact of new legislation on our working processes. We continue to develop our working practices to support these changes. We also contribute to planning system reform and associated legislative workstreams through our involvement in the [Key Agencies Group](#).

Influencing National Plans and Policies

Summary of national plans, policies and strategies where HES provided advice during 2020-21



41

These consultations asked for feedback on some of the key priorities and challenges facing Scotland. We provided advice on how these relate to the care, protection and enjoyment of the historic environment.

ENERGY GENERATION



National offshore wind plan

Heat in Buildings Strategy

ENVIRONMENT



Environment, Climate Change & Land Reform Committee on Green Recovery

Place based economic development zones

COMMUNITIES



Island Communities Impact Assessments Guidance

Digital for Cultural Heritage

PLANNING



National Planning Framework 4

Town Centre Review

Review of Permitted Development Rights

FORESTRY



National Forestry Standard

COVID-19



Impact of COVID 19 on Culture and Tourism Sectors

Advisory Group on Economic Recovery

TRANSPORT



Strategic Transport Projects Review

Cleaner Air for Scotland

ENERGY EFFICIENCY



Just Transition (Energy)

Improving energy efficiency in owner occupied homes

AGRICULTURE



Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture Research 2022 2027

INFRASTRUCTURE



Infrastructure Investment Plan

Offshore decommissioning guidance

During the past year we continued to provide advice on changes to [Permitted Development Rights](#) (PDR), culminating in our response on the first phase of the review programme in November 2020. This first phase of work focussed upon changes to PDR for active travel, digital infrastructure, aquaculture, peatland restoration and agricultural developments. Our advice informed and influenced the changes which were introduced for these sectors earlier this year. In the coming year we will continue work with Scottish Government and other stakeholders on the second phase of the PDR review programme which is expected to focus upon town centre changes of use, electric vehicle charging infrastructure and hill tracks.

We have also engaged with various initiatives that provide opportunities to enhance and support the management of the historic environment. This included participation in the [Review of Scotland's Town Centre Action Plan](#). We gave detailed oral and written evidence to the Scottish Government's Review Panel on the role of our heritage in the re-purposing and re-vitalisation of Scotland's town centres. We emphasised that historic buildings, sites and features can contribute to the success of town centres as high quality, attractive and distinctive environments – and provide unique opportunities for town centres to flourish and thrive. We were also able to profile important and innovative projects for the regeneration of town centres and share our experiences of best practice in this area.

B. DEVELOPMENT PLAN ENGAGEMENT

In our role as a Key Agency, we advise planning authorities at every stage of the development planning process. We play an active role in guiding development to the right places, and we promote the historic environment at the heart of placemaking. We also offer advice to planning authorities on their development plan policies to ensure that our historic environment is given an appropriate level of protection within the planning system.

We are a Consultation Authority for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), and almost half of the SEA consultations we respond to relate to development planning. We advise planning authorities on the assessment and reporting

of environmental effects resulting from these plans for growth and regeneration. This helps to ensure that development is planned in a sustainable way and that potential effects on the historic environment are fully considered in the plan-making process.

At an operational level, we support this engagement by having a coordinating case lead for each Local Development Plan and its accompanying SEA. This supports continuity of engagement and consultation throughout the process.

Due to the important connections between Local Development Planning and Development Management and the fundamental role strategic planning plays in ensuring the right development in the right place, we have continued to commit a significant amount of time and effort towards the preparation of these spatial strategies. This helps to ensure that the historic environment has been fully considered at the earliest stage, with issues and opportunities identified that could influence deliverability. For example, in the past year HES has worked closely with The Highland Council and other Key Agencies to trial a new approach for assisting with the preparation of the next [Inner Moray Firth Development Plan](#) spatial strategy. This approach aimed to focus our comments earlier in the process of site selection by feeding our advice directly into the Council's new online digital platform in order to influence the choices being made between preferred sites and other reasonable alternatives. Not only has this new approach assisted with the selection of sites, the environmental assessment for the strategy and the identification of mitigation to be passed to Development Management, but it has led to various efficiencies and will enable the availability of enhanced information on the site selection process for the public and stakeholders during subsequent stages.

Throughout the year we have continued to support development plan preparation, including participation in several [Transforming Planning working groups](#) which are taking forward different aspects of Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 implementation. This has involved contributing to work on the form, content and procedures for development plan preparation as we look towards several changes coming into effect in the coming year, including the introduction of Evidence Reports and a new Gatecheck procedure.

C. DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

Our role in relation to development management is mainly advisory. We are a statutory consultee for planning applications affecting historic environment assets designated as being of national importance, applications for listed building consent and applications for conservation area consent. We are also a named consultation body for applications that require Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). We are the regulator (decision-maker) in relation to consent for works on scheduled monuments.

The [Historic Environment Policy for Scotland](#) (HEPS) guides the advice we give and the decisions we take. We are committed to providing advice that is proportionate, enabling, clear and unambiguous.

We consider each case on its own merits and will only ask for further information where it is necessary for us to form a view and provide clear advice. We object or refuse consent only where we identify impacts on the historic environment that raise issues of national interest, ensuring our advice is proportionate to the potential impacts of a proposal.

We place significant emphasis on early pre-application engagement in both our advisory and regulatory roles. We are committed to the principles set out in the Key Agencies statement on pre-application engagement for National and Major Developments. Where possible, we aim to provide relative certainty as soon as we are able in the development or consent process.

This year we have seen a particularly marked increase in

pre-planning enquiries related to listed buildings. This rise in enquiries may be associated with wider Covid-19 impacts on planning authorities, reflecting the communication difficulties they faced. We have been able to maintain our service levels uninterrupted throughout the pandemic, due to the implementation of an integrated communication system

A significant long running development management case related to the redevelopment of the Royal High School also came to a conclusion, with Scottish Ministers rejecting an appeal against refusal of planning and listed building consent. This is a landmark case which will inform the development of our guidance on the listed building consent process.

Throughout the year we have provided pre-application support to Scottish Canals as they dealt with the significant breach which took place on the Union Canal as a result of an extreme weather event linked to climate change. Scottish Canals received £6.5M of financial support from Scottish Government to deliver the reinstatement of the canal, and a range of interventions which would provide enhanced resilience against such extreme events, expected to be more prevalent.

After initial discussions with Scottish Canals, we recognised immediately the priority of the works and allocated a team of staff to engage in detailed pre-application discussions with their heritage advisor and design team. This ensured there was a common understanding of the threats the canal network faced, and the impacts of the planned work. We then supported an accelerated application process for the eight scheduled monument consent applications associated with the project, enabling repairs and significant improvements to the canal network to be delivered without delay.



The new Glen Village Weir on the Union Canal, sitting adjacent to the historic weir. One of six upgrades or replacements of historic weirs designed to increase the resilience of the canal network to future extreme weather events.

CAPACITY BUILDING

D. SHARING GOOD PRACTICE, SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

We work with colleagues across the planning and development sector to promote the historic environment and share skills, knowledge and good practice. We respond to Scottish Government consultations and engage with or sit on several national groups. These include the [Heads of Planning Group](#), the [Royal Town Planning Institute](#), the [Key Agencies Group](#), and the [Built Environment Forum for Scotland](#) (BEFS) historic environment working group.

PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

Throughout this year we have also participated in a range of partnership projects with key stakeholders, local communities and communities of interest. These projects have provided opportunities for sharing knowledge and expertise in dealing with historic environment issues.

GARNOCK CONNECTIONS LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP

We are now in our third year as an advisor to the Garnock Connections Landscape Partnership. The partnership is a collaboration with RSPB Scotland, North Ayrshire Council, SEPA, NatureScot and the Scottish Wildlife Trust. It is supported by grants from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and other funders.

We have been working closely with our partners and local communities to help deliver a suite of 25 projects that will restore a network of wildlife habitats and historic sites around the River Garnock valley, which stretches from Lochwinnoch to Irvine. The challenges of the last year have been met head on by the partnership team, who have adapted their plans to include virtual celebrations and online workshops in oral history, archaeology and wildlife recording.

We are very much looking forward to a return to carefully planned site works over the coming year. This will include the restoration of [Peel Tower](#), an unusual late medieval tower house in a spectacular location on an island in Lochwinnoch, which will benefit hugely from the attention of some skilled stonemasons. There will be plenty of opportunities for local communities to get involved too, with archaeological digs and innovative apps that encourage people to get out and explore the hidden heritage of this fantastic corner of Scotland.



In July 2020, we granted SMC for the repair and consolidation of Castle Semple Loch Peel Tower - an unusual variant of the late medieval tower house. The consolidation works are one of 25 projects being delivered by the Garnock Connections Landscape Partnership.

CASE STUDY

REDEVELOPMENT OF INVERNESS CASTLE

Inverness has long been regarded as the gateway to the Highlands but lacks a key heritage attraction for visitors. In response to this, The Highland Council, in partnership with High Life Highland, began developing a project for the conversion of Inverness Castle into a regional visitor attraction in 2014.

The plan to convert Inverness Castle from a courthouse to a cultural attraction involves a major civic building and has a significant potential impact on the tourism industry. In a case like this, which is of national importance, we aim to be closely involved throughout the development of a scheme.

[Inverness Castle](#) is category A listed. It is made up of two principal buildings sitting on the castle hill with ancillary structures around them. The buildings are the courthouse, by William Burn (1833) and the former prison by Thomas Brown (1848). The former prison building was converted to Council offices in the later 20th century, but the court operated from the courthouse until it moved to a newly-built Justice Centre in April 2020.

The transformation of Inverness Castle is supported by a £15 million Scottish Government and £3 million UK Government investment through the City Region deal. The project aims to create a gateway for Highland tourism, contributing to the reinvigoration of tourism across the region and providing much needed investment for the industry to aid the recovery from the effects of the COVID -19 pandemic. It is expected to support economic growth throughout the Highland area, creating a sustainable, viable and 'must-see' attraction that will celebrate the spirit of the Highlands. A key aspiration of the project has been to provide more viewpoints from the historic buildings so visitors can appreciate the river and surrounding townscape.

We have had a key role in this project since its inception in 2014. Our role has been to contribute to the discussion about the principle and scope of the project, to help with the understanding of the significance of the buildings, to contribute specialist advice, and to help guide the design of the project towards a scheme suitable for achieving planning consents.

Detailed planning and listed building consent applications for the visitor attraction were approved on 27 April 2021.



GALLOWAY GLENS LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP SCHEME

We are advisors for the Galloway Glens Landscape Partnership Scheme. The project is a partnership of local and national bodies, including Dumfries & Galloway Council, Forestry, Land Scotland, NatureScot, SEPA, the Galloway Biosphere and others.

The partnership scheme is delivering a suite of projects to improve the condition of, understanding and engagement with, and access to the cultural and natural heritage of the Galloway Glens. This includes funding for a suite of archaeological works, projects engaged in local heritage hubs, Gaelic place names and local history, as well as integrating historic environment concerns into wider landscape conservation projects.

Unlike many other aspects of the wider scheme, most of the cultural heritage projects continued over lockdown. A big part of their success is a series of online presentations celebrating the outcomes of the cultural projects. This has been recognised across Scotland for the interest and public engagement it has generated, and for enabling the wider scheme to keep a high profile throughout the pandemic.

OTHER PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

This year has also seen us engage with the [Outer Hebrides Great Place Scheme](#) and their Heritage Strategy. This is a collaboration between HES, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, HIE, Outer Hebrides Heritage Forum, Museum agus Tasglann nan Eilean, Outer Hebrides Tourism, NatureScot and a number of local and community museum and heritage bodies.

The strategy aims to explore how heritage can support cultural and economic regeneration in the Outer Hebrides and how to develop and maintain a vibrant and sustainable heritage sector, including museums, conservation and research. We have provided data and reports, and contributed to the development of a number of strategy documents. We look forward to continuing to work with the group as these are finalised and the project moves to the next stage.

We continue to engage with the [Coalfield Communities Landscape Partnership](#), which is led by East Ayrshire Council.

By engaging and working with local communities to support, value, and re-invigorate the landscape, the Partnership seeks to deliver a wide range of projects over five years (2020-2025). The project has been awarded an HES grant for an Oral History and Place Names Project and we contributed to the development of the project at its outset.

ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

Due to travel restrictions, some of our engagement moved online. We organised a 'We Love History Live' online event to support Doors Open Day, focusing on [Scotland's Carved Stones](#). The online event was well attended and was made available as an online recording which has since had over 1000 views. We also participated in a '[We Love LGBT History Live](#)' online event focusing on some of the unheard histories, triumphs and tragedies of Scotland's LGBT+ past. This was particularly successful at reaching younger audiences, highlighting equality and diversity issues during LGBT History Month.



The Glamis Cross Slab was one of a number of carved stones featured in our online event 'Scotland's Carved Stones'.



The Hill House,
Helensburgh

GREAT SCOTTISH INTERIORS

We curated an on-line exhibition on [‘Great Scottish Interiors’](#) for the public to view from their homes for free. We used images from our archive to allow the public a rare glimpse inside six of Scotland’s most distinctive homes. Ranging from simple crofting cottages to grand stately homes, the exhibition aimed to reflect the shifting social history of Scotland during the 19th and 20th centuries. The exhibition was supported by a series of on-line ‘We Love History Live’ Q&A events where the public were given the opportunity to ask our specialists questions about each interior.

The exhibition included The Steading, Galashiels - an 18th century farmhouse adapted by sculptor Tim Stead for use as a family home. It is considered to contain the finest examples of his work.

Another stunning interior included was that of The Hill House, Helensburgh - widely recognised as the most iconic home designed by Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Scotland’s most famous architect.



The Steading, Galashiels

COLLABORATION

In October 2019 we published [People, Place and Landscape](#), a joint HES-NatureScot position statement on landscape. Since then, we have continued to work together to develop an Action Plan to support delivery of the Position Statement. We have been monitoring the Action Plan and are moving forward towards delivering its outcomes.

This year we continued to work with NatureScot on their Landscape Character resources, reviewing the 22 regional Landscape Character Assessment background chapters. The background chapters are considerably fuller than the Type descriptions which we contributed to recently.

This work involved 24 staff who worked hard to research multiple areas, share their expertise, and bring their local knowledge to ensure the historic environment is fully integrated and recognised in Landscape Character Assessments. Many of our colleagues have also been involved in subsequent reviews following consultation with local authority archaeologists and NatureScot's editing process. The final product will be published online soon.

TRAINING ACTIVITIES

In our commitment to sharing good practice across the sector, we regularly engage in training activities.

During 2020-21, we hosted a two-session joint online training event for HES and NatureScot Peatland Action staff. The event provided an opportunity for HES staff to learn more about the

importance of peatland restoration, key techniques utilised to achieve restoration, and the process undertaken by Peatland Action to achieve good outcomes. We also delivered training to Peatland Action staff, raising awareness of the historic environment and potential impacts that peatland restoration works may have on sensitive historic assets.

This led to HES being asked to lead on integration between Peatland Action and ALGAO, with Scottish Government involvement. The aim of this was to help streamline the interaction between peatland restoration and historic environment screening, to contribute to the smooth delivery of the National Peatland Programme. HES has also been asked by Scottish Government to feed into the redrafted National Peatland Programme (2021-2026).

We also participated in the first online [Partners in Planning](#) Conference: 'Working with Climate Change in Mind'. Our talk focussed on the ways in which historic assets can be adapted to increase their resilience to our changing climate, and also how improvements can be retrofitted to reduce heat loss. We also discussed the wider contribution our heritage can make as part of a circular and sustainable economy.

Finally, we delivered an online lecture to University of Glasgow undergraduate archaeology students, covering legislation and planning in the historic environment. This presentation was recorded as a resource for students in future years.



POLICY AND GUIDANCE

One of the ways we build capacity and share good practice across the sector is by ensuring that our key policy and guidance documents are up to date and fit for purpose.

Following the launch of the Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS) in May 2019, we began a systematic review of our existing Managing Change Guidance Notes. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this review was put on hold until such time as public and stakeholder engagement could start again.

In 2020-21 we appointed our first Head of Heritage Management Policy, who is taking this review forward. Work is underway to identify and prioritise topic areas that require an updated or new Managing Change guidance note. We aim to take a strategic approach – identifying gaps in our knowledge and demand from our users for further guidance on specific topic areas. This will inform a long-term ongoing programme, aiming to produce three notes in the first year (2021-22).

The Managing Change Guidance Note [Scheduled Monument Consent for Archaeological Excavation](#) has recently been updated and published. A second, [Working on and near to scheduled monuments](#), will be published after the consultation period ends in May 2021.

Following on from the [What's Your Heritage](#) project, we prepared guidance which is intended to help people across Scotland to understand how to investigate, to share and celebrate, and to achieve recognition for the heritage that matters to them. [Talking About Heritage](#) is currently being finalised having been out to consultation between September and December 2020.

The Tinkers' Heart, Argyll was one of a number of case studies included in our draft guidance 'Talking about Heritage'.

The Tinkers' Heart is a unique permanent physical monument to the Scottish Travellers for whom the heart has a very strong symbolic and traditional meaning.



KEY AGENCIES GROUP

During this year we continued to work with colleagues in the Key Agencies Group (KAG). As one of the public bodies that make up the group, an important part of our role in the planning system is to work with the group to share information and support decision-making.

This year KAG has continued to engage closely with the ongoing reforms to the Scottish planning system. This has involved supporting several work packages which are contributing to the implementation of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019.

This work has involved collaborating on a joint [response letter to the Scottish Government's 'Position Statement'](#) for the development of the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4).

This letter highlighted where the Key Agencies can help support the development of NPF4 to address Scotland's current social, environmental and economic challenges. Similarly, KAG has engaged on Scottish Government

workstreams for the development of Regional Spatial Strategies and their relationship with emerging Regional Landuse Partnerships.

KAG collaborated on other key initiatives to support the culture change and improved joint-working required as part of the ongoing planning reforms. These have involved collaborative approaches to placemaking, the use of environmental evidence in development planning and promoting skills development across the sector.

We have also continued to respond collectively to the current challenges presented by Covid-19. This has involved providing joint information to the High-Level Group on Planning Performance and Heads of Planning Scotland on the impacts of Covid-19 on service levels across the Key Agencies Group in order to support the continuation of planning functions and consultation arrangements across Scotland.

PLACEMAKING GROUP AND GREEN RECOVERY

One of the most important ways that we can contribute to improving outcomes for people and places is working collaboratively. As part of our commitment to the Place Principle, we continue to play our part in the working group on Placemaking alongside Key Agency partners.

The focus in the past year for the working group has been how a green recovery can be embedded in place design and how, together, we can help deliver this. The group issued an open offer to planning authorities asking them to identify where our collaboration would be beneficial. We asked them to consider how we can contribute to delivering place objectives and addressing the significant challenges ahead in the development of spatial plans and design tools such as

Regional Spatial Strategies, Local Development Plans, design briefs, and masterplans.

We followed this request up in August 2020 by issuing the document [Supporting a Green Recovery](#), giving further detail on our proposed approach, aspirations and expectations for all partners.

The offer for collaborative working was well received, and we are currently engaging with several planning authorities across Scotland including East Ayrshire, Fife, Stirling and Perth and Kinross across a wide range of projects. We have also held several workshops to facilitate the development of these projects to support this work.

GRADUATE PROGRAMME

We are actively engaged in helping to develop careers in planning and the historic environment. We continue to run our graduate programme, inviting recent graduates to work with us for a year to gain knowledge and experience in the sector. We currently have a graduate in post who has been working with various teams on a range of topics, including supporting our planning services.

E. EVIDENCE AND DATA-SHARING

We continue to add information to the National Record of the Historic Environment – from external contributors, and through our own survey programmes and desk-based assessment. Such information, freely available online, supports heritage management, planning and research, and promotes the resilience of the historic environment through knowledge.

We continue to share data with local authority Historic Environment Records (HER) and annually we send each one a download of the [Canmore](#) site information for their area. We make our information freely available online through [PastMap](#), which includes links to the data of participating HERs. This year we have added a layer for Protected Military Remains to PastMap. Our data is also available to [download from our decisions portal](#) and through a range of websites, with over three million user visits this year.

SERVICE

F. DECISION-MAKING TIMESCALES

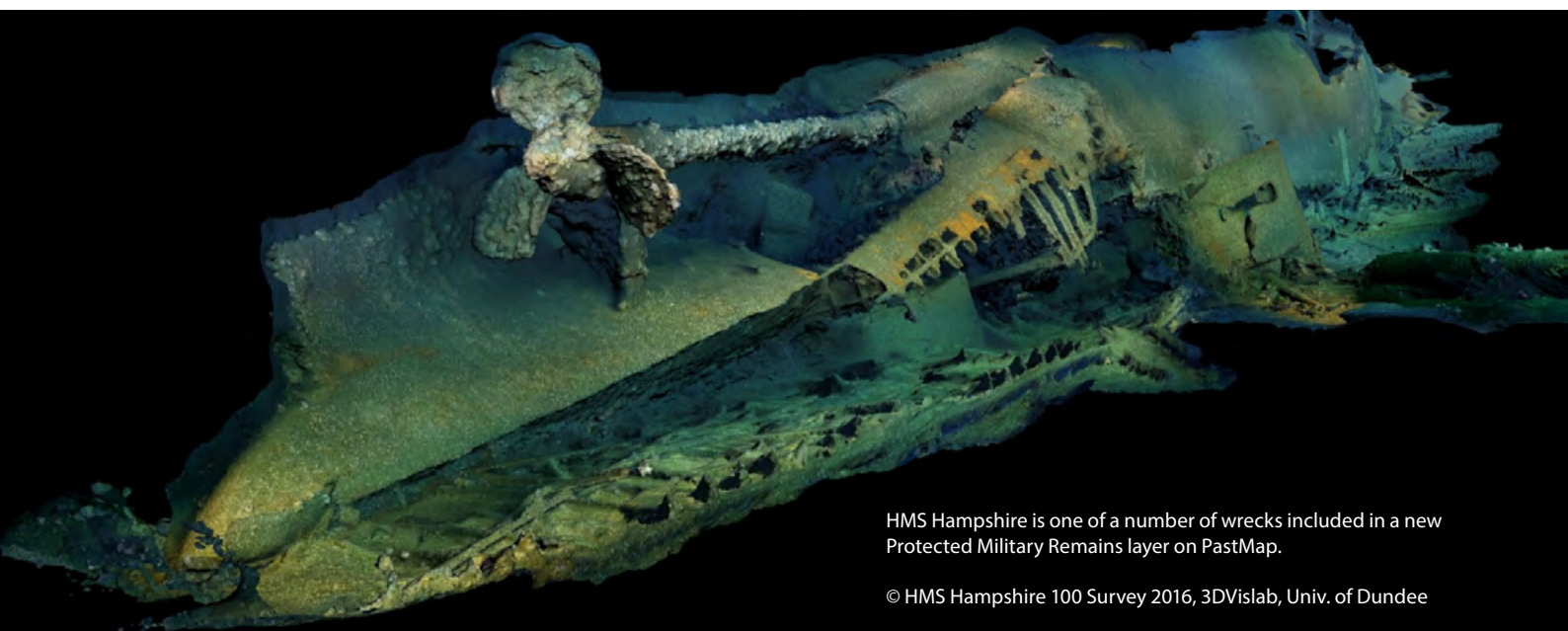
Our Headline Indicators for 2020-21 are consistent with previous years, showing a high level of service across all our planning engagement roles. These cover our timescales for decision-making and consultation responses across the following areas:

- Development planning
- Strategic Environmental Assessment
- Environmental Impact Assessment
- Development management
- Listed building and conservation area consent
- Scheduled monument consent

We have also used this section to report on our other main activities associated with the planning process.

This section covers:

- Scheduled monument enforcement
- Scheduled monument condition monitoring
- Designations
- Complaints handling



HMS Hampshire is one of a number of wrecks included in a new Protected Military Remains layer on PastMap.

DEVELOPMENT PLANNING CASEWORK

During 2020-21 we were consulted on 30 development plan related cases. We have seen a decrease in this type of consultation again this year, almost entirely related to the reduction in the preparation of Supplementary Guidance. This both reflects some of the limitations caused by Covid-19 as well as the wider changes that are taking place as the development planning process transforms to take account of new duties falling from the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019.

This year, we responded to 100% of statutory development plan consultations within the required timescales.

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

During 2020-21 we received 92 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) consultations, and we responded to all of these consultations within the required timescales. 38 (41%) of these consultations related to Local Development Plans and Strategic Development Plans. This proportion is the same as in the last reporting year.

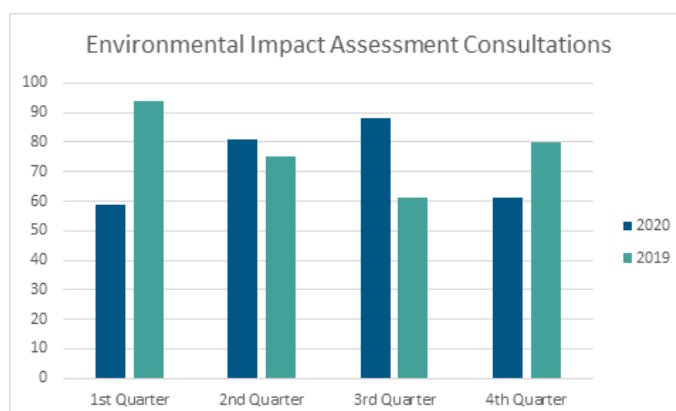
Development Planning Casework				
Consultation Type	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
Pre-Main Issues Reports	1	9	5	14
Main Issues Reports	4	4	6	10
Draft Proposed Plans	5	2	4	9
Proposed Plans	5	5	8	3
Modified Plans	0	1	1	0
Action Programme	2	4	4	1
Examination/Further Information requests	0	4	0	2
Supplementary Guidance	13	22	32	39
Total	30	51	60	78
Percentage statutory development plan consultations within the required timescale	100%	100%	98%	100%

SEA consultations									
Consultation type	Target (days)	2020-21		2019-20		2018-19		2017-18	
Screening report	28	55	100%	102	99%	73	100%	89	100%
Scoping report	35	17	100%	22	100%	32	100%	25	100%
Environmental report	As agreed (typically 6 weeks)	20	100%	39	100%	32	100%	30	100%
Total		92	100%	163	100%	137	100%	144	100%

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

During 2020-21 we received 289 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) consultations, and we responded to 99% within the agreed timescales. There was around a 10% reduction in the number of EIA consultations we received. This reduction was mainly for Scoping Reports received in the first and last quarters of the year. These quarters both relate to periods where travel restrictions were at their highest.

54% of EIA consultations we received related to wind energy. This is an increase of 8% on last year.



EIA consultations									
Consultation type	Target (days)	2020-21		2019-20		2018-19		2017-18	
Screening report		34	97%	36	100%	48	100%	38	100%
Scoping report		105	99%	120	99%	120	100%	130	99%
Environmental report		101	100%	104	100%	118	97%	97	100%
EIA Addendum		49	100%	50	96%	62	97%	36	100%
Total		289	99%	310	99%	348	99%	301	99.7%

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIONS

Our development management headline indicators reflect our response timescales for the following consultation types:

- Planning applications
- Listed building consent
- Conservation area consent

Development management consultations										
Consultation type	Agreed timescale (days)	Target %	Consultation No/ Actual percentage							
			2020-21		2019-20		2018-19		2017-18	
Planning applications	14	82%	890	96%	880	93%	911	96%	869	96%
Listed Building Consent	14	90%	2254	97%	2759	97%	2913	97%	2690	99%
Conservation Area Consent	14	90%	89	92%	126	83%	126	91%	105	86%
All consultations	-	-	3233	96%	3765	96%	3950	97%	3664	98%

Planning applications

In 2020-21 we were consulted on 890 planning applications. This number is broadly similar to last year. However, we saw a 20% reduction in the number of consultations in the 1st and 2nd quarters of the year. The largest percentage of consultations (35%) were received in the 4th quarter. This pattern is likely a reflection of the initial impact of Covid-19, causing delays to the submission of applications to planning authorities, and subsequent consultation with HES.

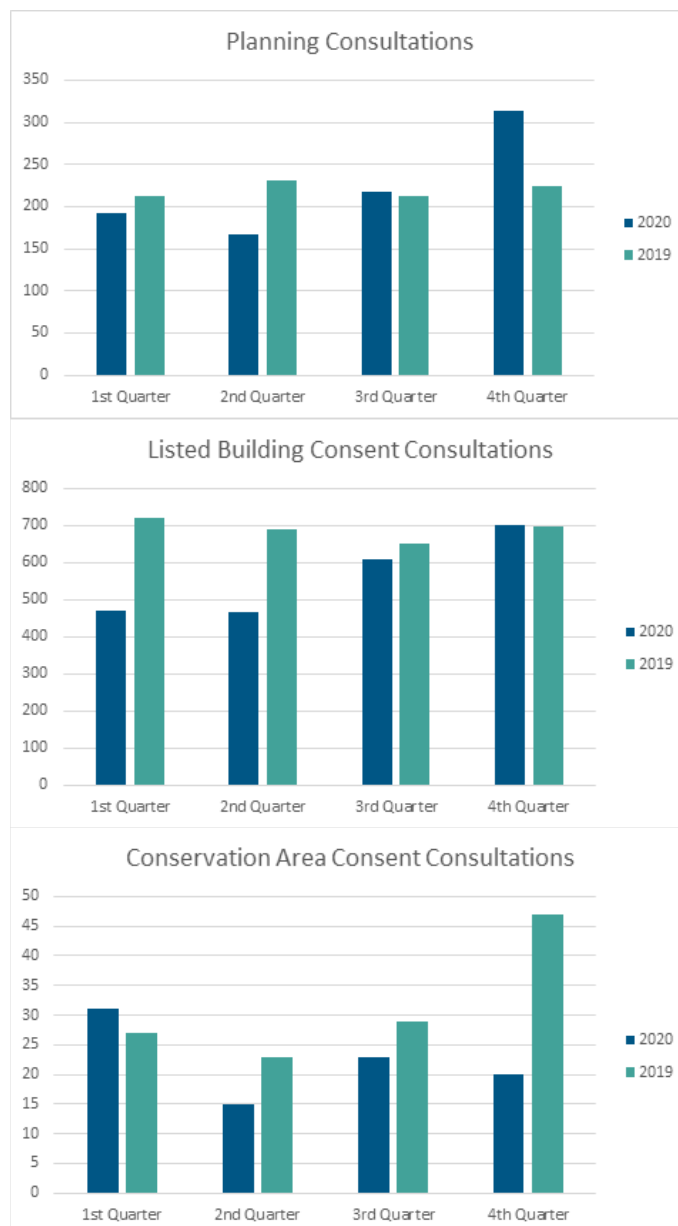
Despite the uneven distribution of consultations, and 10% increase in workload in the 4th quarter, we maintained a high level of service in all cases. We responded to 96% within the required timescales, comfortably exceeding our target of 90%. 38 of our planning responses were objections, representing 4% of our responses. 9% of planning applications were accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment. In addition to our statutory advice, we provided pre-application advice on 150 planning applications, a small decrease on last year.

Listed building consent

In 2020-21 we were consulted on 2252 listed building consent applications. This represents around a 20% reduction in our normal levels of consultation. The decrease in consultations was concentrated in the 1st and 2nd quarters of the year, with a 33% reduction over the 6-month period. The last half of the year has seen consultation levels recover to a comparable level to the previous year. In addition to our statutory advice, we provided formal pre-application advice on 125 listed building consent applications, a similar number to previous years.

We responded to 97% of listed building consent consultations within the required timescale, exceeding our 90% target. 25 of our listed building consent responses were objections, representing 1% of our overall responses. This is a 50% increase on the previous year.

It is likely that Covid-19 restrictions may have affected the quality of submission of listed building consent applications in some instances. This could lead to poor justification for the works or missing information. We will monitor the rate of objections over the coming year to help us understand if this is an emerging trend. We saw a significant rise in general correspondence related to listed buildings this year, with around 150 additional enquiries logged. A review of these cases suggests a significant proportion of these relate to early pre-application advice. We will look to improve identification of early planning enquiries to report this more clearly in coming years.



Conservation Area Consent

We were consulted on 89 conservation area consent applications. This represents around a 30% reduction on previous years. This reduction began in the 2nd quarter, and consultation rates have not recovered. We responded to 92% of conservation area consent consultations within the required timescale. In addition to our statutory advice, we provided pre-application advice on five conservation area consent applications.

Three of our responses were objections, representing 3% of our overall responses.

CASE STUDY

RESULT OF PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO THE ROYAL HIGH SCHOOL

2020 brought to a conclusion a long running planning and listed building consent case relating to proposals for the former Royal High School in Edinburgh.

The building

The category A listed former Royal High School on Regent Road, Edinburgh is an internationally significant Greek Revival building designed in 1825 by the architect Thomas Hamilton. Hamilton based his design on the Propylaeon, a gateway building below the Athenian Parthenon. A replica of the Parthenon was at the same time being built above on Calton Hill. Hamilton's use of the Greek Revival style encouraged comparisons between Calton Hill and the Acropolis – helping give the city the nickname of the 'Athens of the North'.

The school moved to Barnton in 1968. The City of Edinburgh Council (CEC), who owned the building, found various uses for it. The most significant of these resulted in a major refit in 1977/80 to serve as a home for the proposed Scottish Assembly.

After years of underuse, in 2009 CEC held a competition for proposals for the building. A hotel scheme from Duddingston

House Properties (DHP) was given preferred bidder status.

The proposals

In September 2015, an application for planning permission and listed building consent was submitted for a 147 bed hotel with associated conference facilities. The scale of the proposals required two wings either side of the original Hamilton building. Each wing was larger and taller than the listed building itself.

The scheme also included demolition of ancillary buildings including the listed gatehouse and gymnasium/classroom block. Our predecessor body Historic Scotland raised concerns throughout the pre application process and objected to the proposals. Planning permission and listed building consent were refused by CEC in December 2015. A second application for a 127 bed hotel was then submitted. HES objected to the revised scheme and it was also refused by CEC.

In parallel, the Royal High School Preservation Trust submitted proposals for the building's conversion and extension for the St Mary's Music School. HES considered the music school scheme respected the setting of the building and did not object. It was granted planning permission and listed building consent by CEC.

The appeal process

Scottish Ministers directed they would determine the combined appeal for both hotel schemes as the proposals raised issues of national significance. This related to the impact on the historic environment, including the World Heritage site, and also to the potential benefits to the economy and tourism.



In September 2018 a Public Inquiry was held in Edinburgh. As a statutory consultee and objector HES formed a key part of the Inquiry together with the Council. Other participants included the Cockburn Association, the Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland (AHSS), Edinburgh World Heritage and local objectors, including residents' groups.

At the month long Inquiry, we led evidence on the impact of the proposals on the listed building and its setting, and the impact on the Designed Landscape. We also fielded an external expert witness to address the impact of the proposals on the outstanding universal value (OUV) of Edinburgh's World Heritage Site.

Our evidence

Our view at the inquiry, on both the 2015 and 2017 proposals, was that a hotel of the scale proposed could not be accommodated on the site without substantial harm to the historic environment, and to one of Scotland's most significant buildings.

We considered that the two wings either side of the listed Hamilton building would cause great harm to the building and its setting, particularly when viewed from its important western approach. We also led evidence on the impact on other A listed buildings in the vicinity.

The proposals would have significantly impacted Calton Hill, which forms a key feature of the New Town Gardens Inventory designed landscape. Due to its important position at a juxtaposition between the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh, the proposal would also harm the outstanding universal value of the World Heritage Site.

We considered there were other options for the sustainable reuse of the building which better protected its special historic and architectural interest. It was our view that the level of harm to the building could not be justified or outweighed by the proposed benefits to the economy and tourism.

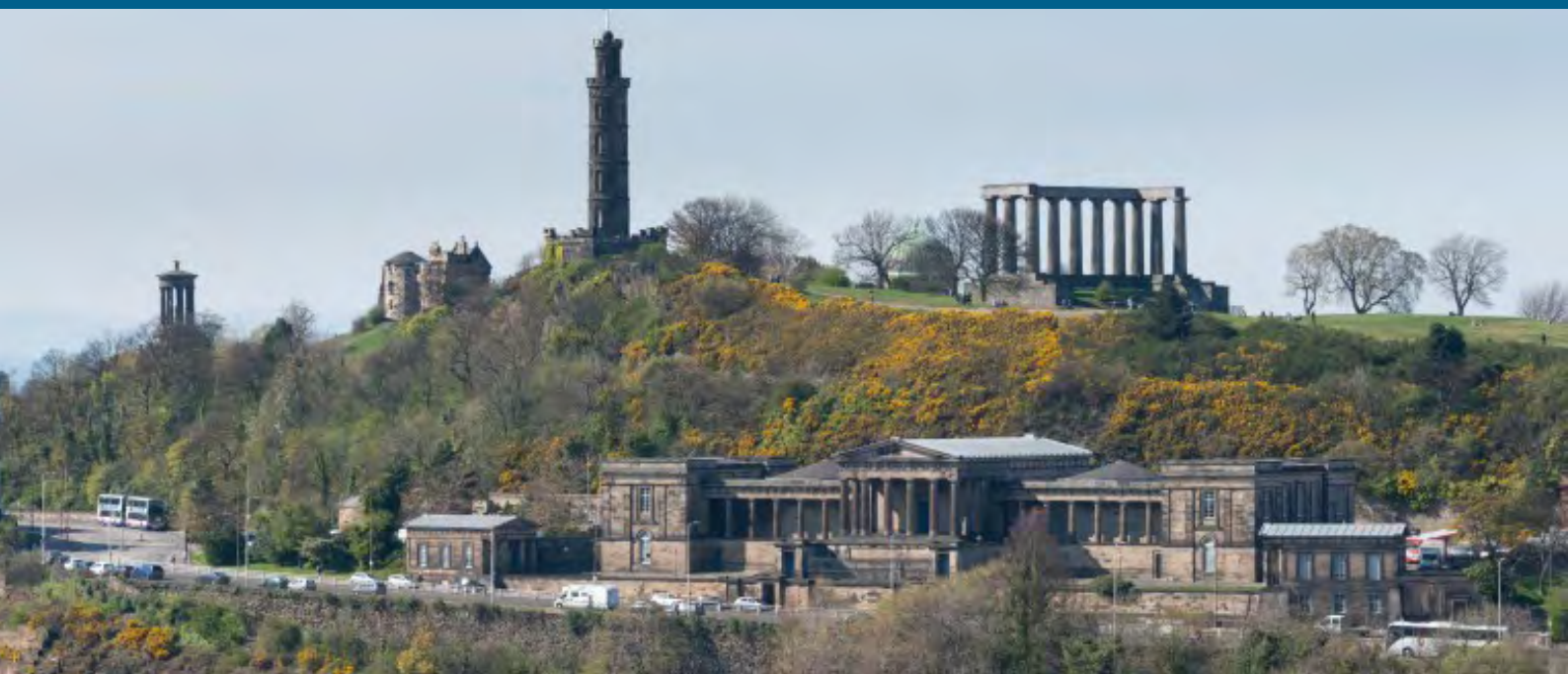
The outcome

Scottish Ministers dismissed both appeals in October 2020. They agreed with our evidence, and concluded that the proposals would result in considerable damage to the setting of the former Royal High School building. They considered that the proposals would have removed its current prominence and domination of its carefully conceived and planned site, reducing it to a subordinate structure set between the taller hotel wings.

They agreed with our evidence that the building was one of the finest public and commercial monuments of the neo classical revival in Europe, and a key building within the World Heritage Site. They found that the proposals would have caused harm to the qualities which justified the inscription of Edinburgh's World Heritage Site.

We hope that a sustainable new use will come forward for this internationally significant building that will safeguard its future while protecting its cultural significance.

This has been an important case which has reconfirmed many of the conservation principles HES apply when advising on planning and listed building consent applications. The decision will now inform the development of a [Managing Change in the Historic Environment](#) guidance note on listed building consent.



SCHEDULED MONUMENT CONSENT

Scheduled monument consent is the mechanism by which we ensure that any changes to monuments of national importance are appropriate and sympathetic to their character. It helps to protect what is a rare and unique resource. Works on scheduled monuments, including repairs, require consent.

Crown bodies (government departments or executive agencies) are not required to apply for scheduled monument consent. Instead, these bodies apply to us for scheduled monument clearance. Metal and mineral detecting consent is required for the use of any equipment capable of detecting metal or minerals on scheduled monuments. This includes metal detectors, magnetometry/gradiometer surveys and ground penetrating radar.

In 2020-21 we processed 260 applications for scheduled monument consent, scheduled monument clearance and metal and mineral detection consent. This represents around a 10% decrease on 2017-19 figures (Figures for 2019-2020 were higher than normal due to a complex project with upwards of 30 associated individual SMC applications). The decrease in the number of applications relates to applications made by the HES Conservation Directorate, a reflection of the closure of Properties in Care due to Covid-19. Additional works required to reopen properties safely was undertaken via an amendment of an existing Section

17 agreement with HES Estates, removing around 30 minor applications from the scheduled monument consent regime.

HES has a duty to notify Scottish Ministers where we are minded to grant scheduled monument consent for works which would allow a greater level of intervention than the minimum level that is consistent with conserving what is culturally significant in the monument. There is no requirement to notify clearance or metal and mineral detecting consent applications.

In 2020-21, we notified 26 applications (11%). This is a significant rise in terms of both numbers and percentages on previous years. The rise in applications being notified was mainly due to an increase in the number of applications for archaeological excavation from academic institutions.

We determined 97% of non-notified SMC applications within eight weeks. Only 4% of notified applications were determined within eight weeks. This reflects the increase in processing time due to notification requirements. 92% of scheduled monument clearance and 100% of metal and mineral detecting consent applications were determined within eight weeks.

No applications were refused or part refused. All of our scheduled monument consent decisions are published through our [decisions portal](#). The [Historic Environment Scotland Act 2014](#) introduced a right of appeal against scheduled monument consent decisions. None of our decisions have yet been subject to appeal.

Scheduled Monument Consent

	Agreed timescale	Target percentage	2020-21		2019-20		2018-19		2017-2018	
Scheduled monument consent applications	8 weeks	80%	230	86%	317	94%	259	88%	235	95%
Scheduled monument clearance applications	8 weeks	80%	13	92%	9	100%	9	100%	13	100%
Metal and mineral detecting consent	8 weeks	80%	17	100%	22	100%	28	100%	37	100%
Total			260	87%	348	95%	296	90%	285	96%

An amendment was made to the existing Section 17 Agreement with the HES Conservation Directorate. The amended agreement enabled minor works such as directional signage, installation of hand sanitisers, ground markings and barriers to be undertaken, allowing properties to be reopened to the public without delay.

At Edinburgh Castle, removable paint was used to demarcate socially distanced viewing areas to facilitate safe viewing of the one o'clock gun.



CASE STUDY

COLLABORATION AND USE OF TECHNOLOGY TO INFORM RAPID RESPONSE TO SIGNIFICANT BREACH AND SUBSEQUENT DEWATERING OF THE UNION CANAL

The canal

The Union Canal is a remarkable surviving example of Georgian engineering. Built to connect the coal fields of central Scotland to Edinburgh, its construction on the contour 240' above sea level (73m) meant that it avoided use of time consuming locks, although three major aqueducts were required.

After years of decline it was officially closed in the 1960s. It reopened in 2001 as part of the Millennium Link project, making it once again possible to travel along its length from Edinburgh to Falkirk. At Falkirk the canal was extended to connect to the Falkirk Wheel and the Forth and Clyde Canal below.

The entire length of the canal is nationally important and is protected as a scheduled monument. In addition to its clear engineering and historical interest, it is also of significance to communities along the length of the canal as it continues

to be enjoyed by walkers and cyclists and plays host to an increasing number of activities on the water.

The breach

On the night of 11 August 2020, an extreme weather event caused a breach in a section of the canal embankment at Muiravonside, near Falkirk. The rainfall caused water to spill over the towpath and erode the embankment from the far side, resulting in the failure of a 30m section of embankment.

The resultant water loss led to significant flooding in the surrounding area, including the main Glasgow to Edinburgh Train Line.

Scottish Canals worked quickly to install temporary dams to stem the flow of water, and rescued over 11,000 fish from the flood waters. However, the damage to the canal was severe. In addition to the 30m section of collapsed embankment, further embankment slippages were found nearby.

The repair

Repair works to any scheduled monument require scheduled monument consent (SMC). A repair of this nature is challenging at the best of times; the Covid 19 pandemic brought additional complications.

We met with Scottish Canals on site at the earliest opportunity to view the damage to the canal and discuss a range of emergency and permanent works that were needed to secure and repair the canal. Their expert team of engineers and heritage advisors had already begun the process of considering options for repair.

It was clear that the design of any permanent works would



Images of the breach prior to installation of temporary dams to stem the flow of water. Over 11,000 fish were rescued from the flood waters below the breached section. Images © Scottish Canals

evolve as a better understanding was gained of the nature of the embankment collapse.

A complex SMC application such as this would normally require a number of site visits to assess each proposed change. However, due to Covid 19 restrictions, we were keen to limit site visits and trial new methods to remotely assess applications.

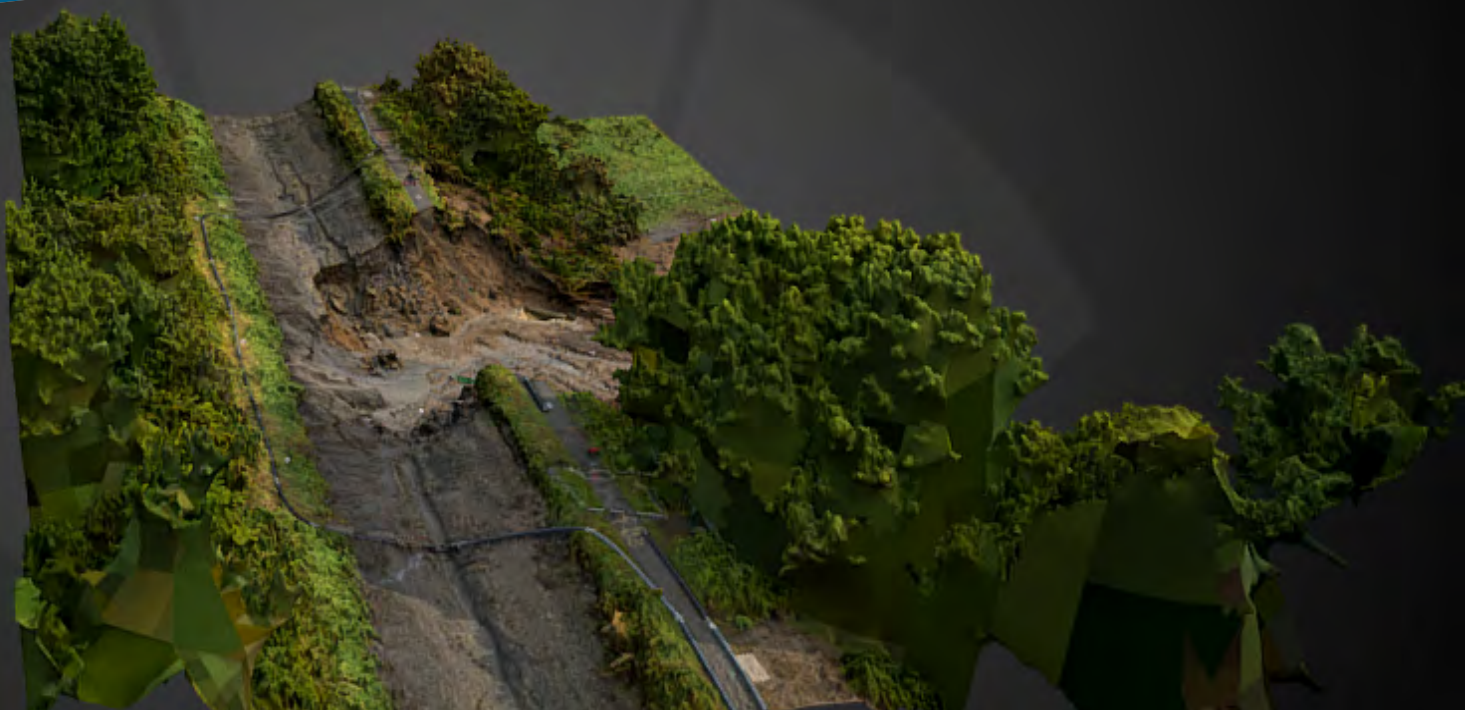
3D modelling

Our Survey team were able to undertake a detailed remote survey of the site using an unmanned aerial vehicle. A [detailed 3D model](#) of the area of the breach was produced, which we shared with Scottish Canals and published online.

The model provided a detailed record of the damaged section of the canal and assisted in the preparation of a scheme of work for repairs. As this scheme of work developed, we were able to use the model to assess changes and avoid the need for further site visits.

We gave a rapid response to the initial [application for SMC](#), approving it in under two weeks, and also to later requests for changes to the approved scheme of works. The repairs were successfully completed, allowing rewatering of the canal in February 2021.

A detailed [3D model](#) was created to provide a permanent record of the breach, and assist in discussions around repair.



SCHEDULED MONUMENT ENFORCEMENT

In 2020-21 there was a small rise in reports of unauthorised works on scheduled monuments. The number of reports is likely to have been suppressed due to the suspension of the HES Scheduled Monument Condition Monitoring Programme as a result of Covid-19. This programme normally contributes to around 30% of reported cases. It is expected that there will be a corresponding rise in cases next reporting year.

There was a noted rise in the percentage of unauthorised works reports related to breaches of SMC, metal detecting, construction works and camping or campfires. It is likely that lockdown restrictions contributed to this increase. Nationally,

there was a significant increase in 'dirty' or unauthorised camping on scheduled monuments.

Two new cases were referred to the Procurator Fiscal relating to unauthorised metal detecting on scheduled monuments. One resulted in a Fiscal warning. The second case is awaiting trial, along with two cases from the previous year.

While HES has enforcement powers in relation to scheduled monuments, other bodies have enforcement powers for other designated heritage assets, such as local authorities who are responsible for enforcement related to listed buildings.

Scheduled Monument Enforcement Cases				
	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-2018
Reports of unauthorised works	166	160	137	73
Advisory letters	18	24	41	24
Informal Resolutions	12	21	15	11
Warnings	3	4	1	1
Enforcement Notices	2	0	1	0
Referral to Procurator Fiscal	2	2	0	0

SCHEDULED MONUMENT CONDITION MONITORING

We monitor the condition of scheduled monuments and meet their owners as a key part of our duty to care for the historic environment. Engaging with owners and land managers is the most important part of this work. Scheduled monuments can easily be overlooked and are sometimes buried below ground, so reminding owners about them is particularly important.

Regular engagement is key in preventing accidental damage or unauthorised works. It also allows us to recommend changes that could improve the condition of monuments and secure their future. During visits to monuments we also record their condition. This information forms part of [Scotland's Historic Environment Audit](#) and allows us to understand and respond to nationwide challenges such as climate change.

In a normal year we would expect to visit 500-700 scheduled monuments and assess aerial photographs of a further 250. In 2020-21, Covid-19 severely reduced our ability to make visits. Nevertheless, in the autumn we were able to monitor 74 monuments. Of these, 82% were in broadly satisfactory condition. The number of visits is too small for analysis of condition trends but the proportion in satisfactory condition is in line with recent years – annual figures fluctuate between about 70% and 90%. No flights to photograph scheduled

monuments were possible.

We adapted our work by assessing satellite photographs of scheduled monuments. These images can span a 10-year period and are often not suitable for detailed condition monitoring. However, they can support a coarse-grained assessment of where issues may be present. We assessed imagery of 5473 scheduled monuments. For 90% of these we could reach a very broad assessment of whether there were condition issues.

Significant management issues were noted for 1400 monuments – about 25% of those assessed. Minor management issues were noted for 1068 monuments – about 20% of those assessed.

As Scotland prepares for the lifting of travel restrictions, we have been working with owners to help them face the additional pressures on the countryside. We are providing free signage to owners to inform members of the public that sites are scheduled monuments and that activities like camping or lighting fires are not appropriate. This activity should help to prevent problems occurring, and assist with enforcement action where damage does occur.

DESIGNATIONS

Maintaining accurate and up to date records is key for understanding designated sites and places and giving them appropriate weight in the planning process. There are currently over 55,000 national designations which include scheduled monuments, listed buildings, gardens and designed landscapes, battlefields and historic marine protected areas.

We designate new sites and places every year. We also remove designations where sites and places no longer meet the relevant criteria.

This year, we made 769 designation decisions. This includes decisions to designate new sites and places, and decisions to amend or remove existing designations. It also includes minor record changes, and 186 cases where we decided not to take any action. The reduction in total number of decisions compared with previous years is largely a consequence of impacts related to Covid-19.

One scheduling and three listing appeals were submitted this year. Two of the listing appeals were dismissed following consideration by the Reporter. The Reporter did not consider the third listing appeal because the application was received more than three months after the decision. The scheduling appeal was also not considered valid, as it related to land that had been removed from the scheduling designation.

For listing, two Certificate of Intention Not to List applications were confirmed, meaning that a building will not be listed for five years from the date the certificate is granted.

Amendments are material changes to designations. These alter what is designated. For scheduled monuments, Inventory gardens and designed landscapes, and Inventory battlefields, this is a change to the description or the boundary map of the designated area. For listed buildings, this is a change to the address identified in the listing.

Minor record changes are updates to the supplementary information which describe the site or place, identify its location or provide additional references or data. These cases reflect ongoing maintenance of our designation records.

The following tables set out the changes made to scheduled monuments, listed buildings, gardens and designed landscapes and battlefields designations. There have been no changes to historic marine protected areas this year.

In January 2021, we listed eight multi-storey flats in Aberdeen category A because of their outstanding architectural and historic interest.

These eight towering examples of modern architecture, which have dominated the skyline of the Granite City for 60 years, help tell the story of post-war Scotland.

Aberdeen City Council have lodged an appeal against the decision to list the buildings, which is currently being considered by the Department of Planning and Environmental Appeals Division of the Scottish Government.



Scheduled monument designations	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
Designations (additions to the Schedule)	16	7	26	18
Changes to existing designations:				
Amendments	21	34	50	53
Minor record changes	132	335	638	246
Removal from Schedule	21	55	22	44
Appeals	0	0	0	0
Listed buildings	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
Designations (additions to the List)	32	42	14	42
Changes to existing designations:				
Amendments	59	88	91	84
Minor record changes	209	451	762	313
Removal from the List	51	112	71	155
Appeals	2	3	2	5
Certificate of Intention Not To List (COINTL)	2	2	0	0
Gardens and designed landscapes	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
Designations (additions to the Inventory)	1	1	2	0
Changes to existing designations				
Amendments	1	1	4	9
Minor record changes	13	4	4	11
Removal from Inventory	0	0	2	6
Battlefields	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
Designations (additions to the Inventory)	0	0	0	0
Changes to existing designations				
Amendments	0	1	0	0
Minor record changes	1	0	0	0
Removal from Inventory	0	1	0	0
Total number of designation decisions (including all designations and other work not mentioned above)	769	1434	2377	1369

CASE STUDY

CONSULTATION AND DESIGNATION OF KINGSTON BRIDGE, GLASGOW

In June and July 2020, we sought views on our proposal to designate the [Kingston Bridge](#), which forms part of the M8 motorway in Glasgow, as a category B listed building. The launch of the consultation coincided with the 50th anniversary of the opening of the bridge, which opened as part of Glasgow's inner city ring road on 26 June 1970.

The bridge

The Kingston Bridge is a dramatic piece of structural engineering that was nominated for listing by Transport Scotland and found to meet our criteria for designation. Forming a key part of Scotland's first motorway, it transformed both the physical and social fabric of Glasgow and is an important example of major urban planning of the post war period.

The bridge is of special architectural and historical interest as it is among one of the most significant and high profile bridge projects completed in Scotland during the 1960s and 70s. It has also had social and environmental implications, particularly on the neighbouring areas.

The consultation

We recognised that Kingston Bridge is well known across Scotland, and we wanted to make sure our consultation on listing reached as wide an audience as possible. To enable this, we used the [Scottish Government's Citizen Space](#) digital platform. This was the first time we had used this platform to consult on a designation decision. This facility gave better access to our [Decisions Portal](#) and made it easier for respondents to make comments by giving them a direct email link to the case.

We had a substantial response, with 69 written comments received from a range of interested people and groups, both locally and nationally. There were also many comments on social media platforms and a high level of coverage in the press.

The detailed responses we received about the issues and concerns has given us a greater depth and understanding of the context of the Kingston Bridge and how it is viewed by people in Glasgow and beyond.

What people said

The vast majority of those who responded were not in favour of the listing. Many people thought that by listing the bridge it meant that it would never be allowed to change. There were concerns that this type of historic infrastructure which is related to car use would hinder efforts to reduce Scotland's carbon emissions.

People also told us about what they thought about the special architectural and historic interest of the bridge – some were impressed by the engineering and the design, others thought it



was not architecturally significant.

While the only criteria for listing a building is whether it is of special architectural or historic interest, we took what people said into account in our decision making. It was important for us to find out about how people valued the site and what they thought about the practical implications of listing.

What we did

We considered the responses and we have had further discussion with Glasgow City Council and Transport Scotland. While we did not find that any comments put into question the special architectural or historic interest of the bridge, we made changes as a result of the comments received and clarified what listing means.

We reconsidered the category of listing and listed the bridge at category C, not category B. This reflects the comments about the special architectural or historic interest of the bridge. We amended our assessment and the listed building record to capture wider views about the bridge and its impact on the surrounding communities when it was constructed.

We also increased our communications around listing and what being designated as a listed building means – to explain that listing does not prevent change but does allow for a structure's special character to be taken into account when changes are proposed.

We also ensured that the increasing importance of places constructed after the Second World War was communicated through a new video about [why we list modern buildings](#).

Michael Matheson, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity :

The Kingston Bridge has become an iconic landmark in Glasgow, so I'm pleased to see its 50 years of operation being recognised in this way.

The crossing played its part in taking a significant amount of traffic off the city centre streets and paved the way for the pedestrianisation of Sauchiehall Street, Buchanan Street and Argyle Street. It has also courted some controversy over the past half century, but there is no doubt it continues to play a vital role today.

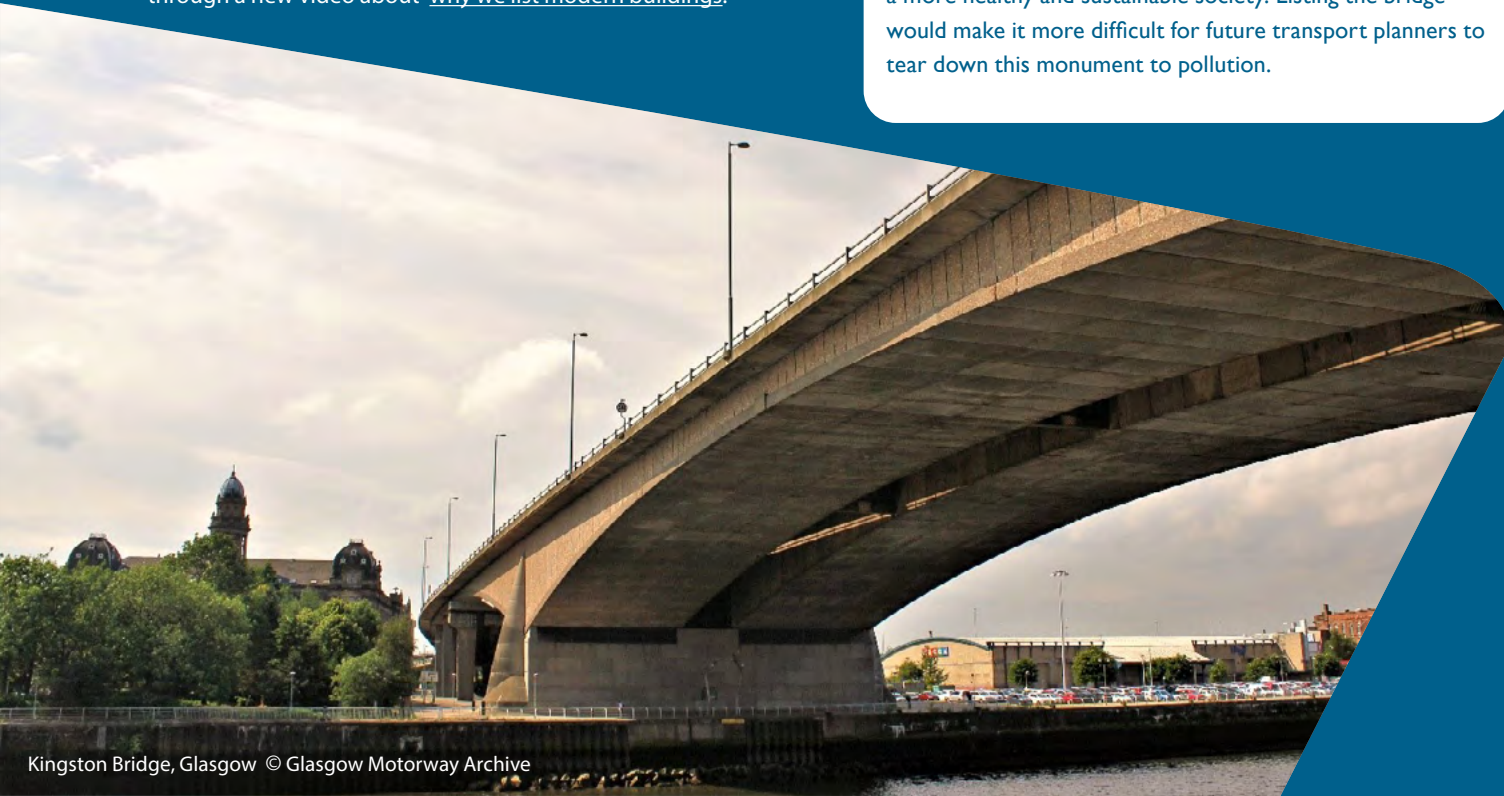
The work that's been carried out to ensure it continues to do this job in the future has won civil engineering awards, so having the Kingston Bridge formally listed is a fitting way to mark its impact over the past 50 years.

Private individual:

While I am a fan of brutalist architecture, listing the structure of the weakest point in Glasgow's motorway network just serves to undermine future development – either expansion of the motorway network, or for future reconfiguration as has happened in the city of Utrecht in the Netherlands. Infrastructure always needs to evolve and listing the Kingston Bridge is a great way of preventing that evolution.

Private individual:

Far too much priority has been given to cars in recent decades. That must be reversed in future if we are to create a more healthy and sustainable society. Listing the bridge would make it more difficult for future transport planners to tear down this monument to pollution.



COMPLAINTS HANDLING AND INFORMATION REQUESTS

This year we received three formal complaints. Two complaints were handled under stage one (frontline resolution).

The first of these related to an image in one of our publications. Following discussion with the complainant we were able to allay their concerns and the complaint was, therefore, not upheld. We did, however, agree that a more recent image would be used in future editions of the publication.

The second complaint related to a request under the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations. One of the involved parties could not access information on a third party website that they needed to inform their response to a query from us. We upheld this complaint, agreeing that the information should have been available – the issue was quickly resolved by the third party.

One of our formal complaints was handled under stage two of our complaints handling procedure (investigation). This complaint related to our handling of a designation enquiry where the personal information of a private individual was published on our [decisions portal](#). On receipt of the complaint, the information was immediately removed. We upheld this complaint and have amended our procedures to ensure the necessary checks and systems are in place to avoid this happening again.

[Our guidance on complaints handling procedures](#) is available from our website. The guidance is in the process of being updated, in line with the [new model complaints handling procedure](#) provided by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

We received 22 information requests; all were handled under the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004. Of these, the information was released for nine, partially released for 10, withheld for one and not held for two. No reviews of our decisions were requested.

All these requests related to information about heritage assets, their designation or advice/decisions we have given as part of a change management process.

G. SERVICE STATEMENTS AND JOINT WORKING AGREEMENTS

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENTS

In 2019 staff from across the Heritage Directorate completed a review of the high-level text of all 389 of the Landscape Character Type Descriptions. These were being published online in 2020. This year our Planning, Consents and Advice Service reviewed the more detailed text of the 22 Background Chapters. In some cases, this involved considerable input of numerous staff with a range of expertise. These texts are currently being reviewed by NatureScot and are due to be published shortly.

JOINT AGREEMENT BETWEEN HES AND NATURESCOT ON THE STREAMLINING OF SCHEDULED MONUMENT CONSENT AND SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST (SSSI) CONSENT

In July 2020, NatureScot and HES agreed a new joint protocol for applications for works which require both scheduled monument consent and SSSI consent. This streamlined approach removed the requirement to apply separately to each organisation for the necessary consents. Both are now dealt with through a single application for scheduled monument consent, with data being shared with NatureScot to enable SSSI consent to be granted in parallel.

SECTION 17 AGREEMENTS

[Section 17 of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979](#) gives HES powers to enter into an agreement with other parties in relation to the maintenance and preservation of a scheduled monument. All works specified within such an agreement have deemed consent under the [Ancient Monuments \(Class Consents\) \(Scotland\) Order 1996](#) and do not require separate scheduled monument consent. Works carried out within a section 17 agreement are audited on a yearly basis to ensure compliance.

The HES Heritage Directorate has an [existing Section 17 agreement with the HES Conservation Directorate](#) in relation to minor maintenance works on scheduled monuments across the HES Estate. This was updated in August 2020 to include a temporary annex of minor works required across the estate to enable properties to re-open in a Covid-19 safe manner.

We also signed a ground-breaking [section 17 agreement with Scottish Canals in March 2021](#). The first external agreement of its kind, this agreement will reduce regulatory red tape and enable Scottish Canals to undertake routine works on the scheduled canal network without delay, whilst ensuring compliance through a comprehensive audit process.

CASE STUDY

SECTION 17 AGREEMENT WITH SCOTTISH CANALS

In 2020/21 we signed our first external [Section 17 agreement with Scottish Canals](#), enabling them to carry out essential work without making multiple applications for scheduled monument consent (SMC).

Most works on scheduled monuments require SMC. This can be a lengthy process, with applications taking approximately eight weeks. Scottish Canals manage Scotland's historic canal network, and are responsible for over 40 individual scheduled monuments which together make up the Caledonian, Crinan, Forth and Clyde, Union and Monklands Canals. Each year they submit between 30 and 50 applications for works on the canal network. Most are for routine work to ensure the canal network is safe, functioning and accessible.

[Section 17](#)

Section 17 of the [Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979](#) gives HES powers to enter into an agreement with other parties in relation to the maintenance and preservation of a scheduled monument.

All works specified within a section 17 agreement have deemed consent under the Ancient Monuments (Class Consents) (Scotland) Order 1996, and do not require separate SMC. Works carried out within a section 17 agreement are audited on a yearly basis to ensure compliance.

The HES Heritage Directorate have an existing agreement with the HES Conservation Directorate to enable routine maintenance work on the HES Estate, but the agreement with Scottish Canals is the first external agreement of its type. The partnership agreement was the result of five years of discussions. It is an exciting, and very positive example of collaboration between two non-departmental public bodies, which benefits features of our industrial past that today are highly valued by many.

[The benefits](#)

The agreement will represent significant efficiencies for Scottish Canals and HES. Around 50% of works applied for in previous SMC applications are now covered by the new agreement. This is a substantial saving in time and resources for both organisations, and will allow us to focus on strategic or more complex cases.

The signing of the agreement was recognised by a virtual meeting held online and attended by both parties on the 23rd of March 2021.

[The signing of the Section 17 Agreement is a positive outcome following a number of years work from both Scottish Canals and HES. The result is an excellent example of collaboration and partnership working which will continue to shine a light on all that both organisations do to protect and safeguard Scotland's canals.](#)

[The streamlining of the process will allow Scottish Canals to continue to focus on the assets which need essential restorative work, while allowing resources to be channelled into other projects, allowing us to effectively work towards our wider business goals.](#)

Catherine Topley, Chief Executive, Scottish Canals

We are delighted to have worked with Scottish Canals to produce this agreement which acts in a similar manner to a pre-agreed Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC). This will enable Scottish Canals to carry out essential work without applying for a new SMC each time, saving time and resource.

This collaboration highlights the importance of partnership working to protect and manage our historic environment, and we hope that it will enhance the benefit of these features of our industrial past for the many people who use, live on, work on or beside, and enjoy the canals.

Barbara Cummins, Director of Heritage, HES



H. ENGAGEMENT WITH SERVICE USERS

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN OUR DECISION MAKING

In 2020-21, we added a new function to our [decisions portal](#), which lets members of the public comment on applications for scheduled monument consent. We also started to put an indication of the likely decision-making timescale on each application. This makes sure that third parties have an opportunity to comment before we make a final decision. This process is not required by law, but we welcome observations from interested third parties.

Over the period 2020-21, we have taken steps to engage further with the public about our decision-making for designations. We have made it simpler for everyone to make representations to our consultations, streamlined our processes and increased our output on a range of social media platforms. We are using our [consultation hub](#) on Citizen Space to raise awareness of public consultations on cases where we think wider public interest is likely.

In August 2020, we sought views on our proposal to designate [the former Langside Synagogue](#) in the Crosshill area of Glasgow, as a category C listed building. The building is a rare surviving example of a purpose-built synagogue in Scotland. The use of traditional Eastern European folk-art style elements is particularly rare in Scotland and reflects the synagogue's early 20th century congregation. It is of significant historical interest for what it can tell us about the development of the Jewish community in Glasgow in the early 20th century.

Over 840 individuals and groups from all over the world

contacted us in support of listing. Many responses expressed concern about the future of the building. The level of interest shown both locally and internationally for this building and Scotland's Jewish heritage was unprecedented for a consultation of this type. It was especially important to us to hear views about the special architectural and historic interest of the building and we took this into account in our decision-making.

After considering the comments received during the consultation, we have now listed the former Langside Synagogue at category C.

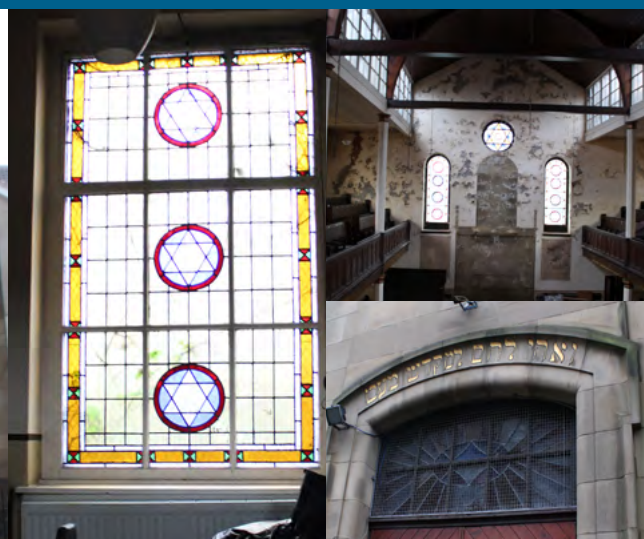
This was a valuable learning experience for us, both in the practicalities of dealing with a large number of comments, and in ensuring that they were all duly considered in making our final decision. In particular, we saw the need to streamline how consultation comments are submitted, managed and responded to during this process.

The responses also demonstrated that there are many misconceptions about what listing means, and what impact it has on the future of a building. To address these issues, we have made improvements to our portal. This will make it easier to search for decisions that are in progress and to leave comments on our proposals. We have also altered our consultation document to make it clearer what comments we can take into consideration when deciding if a building is of special architectural or historic interest.

On high-profile cases, we have used Citizen Space to provide an overview of the comments received at consultation and to explain the steps that were taken before a final decision was made. It also provides an opportunity to promote the meaning and implications of listing to a large audience.



Former Langside Synagogue



ENGAGEMENT ON POLICY AND GUIDANCE DEVELOPMENT

Our policy and guidance development was on hold for much of the year due to the impacts of Covid-19. From March to May 2021 we carried out an online consultation on an update to our Managing Change guidance [Working On and Near to Scheduled Monuments](#). This is the first of a number of updates to existing guidance planned in the next 12 months.

JOINT PLANNING SYSTEM CUSTOMER SURVEY WITH NATURESCOT

This year we have worked with NatureScot to develop and pilot a joint approach to seeking feedback from stakeholders. The Joint Planning System Customer Survey gathered data for both organisations, helping us to understand how stakeholders feel we are performing our role in the planning system.

This collaborative approach has enabled performance benchmarking across the two organisations. It also makes the consultation process more efficient, and reduces consultation fatigue for stakeholders. We are currently exploring how we can build on this customer survey and gain more insights from stakeholders and those we serve.

ENGAGEMENT IN DESIGN REVIEW PANELS

We regularly participate on panels to review and offer advice on design options. We aim to support good development and achieve positive outcomes for the historic environment where possible.

This includes:

- contributing to Architecture and Design Scotland's review panels and workshops
- attending Local Authority-led design panels
- participating the Local Authority Urban Design Forum

SPONSORSHIP OF AWARDS

We sit on the judging panel of the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (RIAS) awards and sponsor the Historic Environment Scotland Award for Conservation and Climate Change. We took part in the Judging Panel in early March 2020. The awards are currently postponed but should take place once it is possible to visit the shortlisted projects.

SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

Changes to meet this year's Improvement

	Service improvement actions for 2020-21	Was the service improvement achieved?
1	We recognise that the best way we can improve our service is by demonstrating a broader understanding of our society and our heritage. We will do this by developing a human rights approach to our work on equality and diversity. We will listen and reflect and consider our progress in this to be a key indicator of our performance now and in the future.	<p>Acting on the findings of the 'What's Your Heritage' campaign, we consulted on draft guidance Talking About Heritage. This is intended as accessible guidance to help the public to investigate, to share and celebrate, and to achieve recognition for the heritage that matters to them. The guidance also looks at heritage that is divisive and acknowledges that not all heritage is to be celebrated. A final version of the guidance will be published in summer 2021.</p> <p>We have started a review of our guidance note Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Accessibility to ensure the guidance takes a more holistic approach to issues of inclusivity and diversity.</p> <p>We have also taken steps to consider how inclusivity will be taken into account in all of our work, identifying the need for internal and external guidance and training. We have reviewed the language in our advice letters and removed gendered terms and assumptions about individuals' preferred pronouns and titles. We have identified a need to make the language of our letters generally more accessible and will be implementing a plain English programme in the coming year.</p>
2	Continue to administer our designations, advice and statutory consultation functions and scheduled monument consenting regime efficiently and transparently. In doing so, we will reflect on the findings of our joint customer survey with NatureScot and identify further service improvements where possible.	<p>This year has brought many challenges in our continued effort to administer our designations, advice and statutory consultation functions, and the scheduled monument consenting regime efficiently and transparently.</p> <p>We have updated our designation application forms and now publish them on our decisions portal. We have also introduced an online system to enable members of the public to comment on proposed designations decisions at the point of consultation. These changes make our decisions more transparent and give the public a greater involvement in the designation process. We also made business improvements to enable our designation processes to operate digitally throughout the pandemic. New processes have ensured that digital authorisation is secure and robust.</p> <p>We have introduced an online system to enable members of the public to comment on scheduled monument consent applications, giving clear and transparent deadlines for determination of the application.</p> <p>We have identified service improvements from our joint NatureScot customer survey. The response highlighted areas for improvements in our service. These are: consistency of advice within and across the organisation; clarity and conciseness of guidance; greater collaboration with other agencies and those involved in the planning process. These are included in the service improvements for 2021-22.</p> <p>We have continued to work on our Managing Change in the Historic Environment guidance series. We have published an update to Scheduled Monument Consent for Archaeological Excavation and have completed a consultation on an update to Working On and Near to Scheduled Monuments.</p>

	Service improvement actions for 2020 21	Was the service improvement achieved?
3	Lead HES planning response highlighting where the historic environment can make a significant contribution to a green economic recovery after the Covid-19 crisis.	<p>In 2020-21 we responded to a consultation on Scotland's Town Centre Action Plan, identifying where the historic environment can positively contribute to Green Recovery.</p> <p>We also contributed to the drafting of HES's Green Recovery Statement as part of developing a narrative for the historic environment and its relationship with other policy areas. The Statement is being drafted and will be subject to internal and external engagement prior to publication.</p>
4	Provide advice during the development of Scotland's National Planning Framework 4 and its incorporation of Scottish Planning Policy, as required by Scottish Government Planning and Key Agencies.	Following on from our formal response to the NPF4 Position Statement in February 2020, we have been engaged in continuous dialogue with Scottish Government and are actively supporting them with further drafting of NPF4.
5	Work with local authorities to identify more efficient and effective working practice.	<p>We have held a number of meetings with the Built Environment Forum Scotland (BEFS) to explore the opportunity and value of a pan local authority heritage officer group – as a forum in which to share information and best practice and to disseminate knowledge and expertise.</p> <p>We have engaged with the Highland, Scottish Borders and City of Edinburgh councils to discuss any issues arising from our service delivery.</p>
6	Continue joint working NatureScot to develop a common understanding of landscape to ensure that cultural and natural aspects are recognised.	<p>We have attended regular meetings with NatureScot to discuss current issues, including NPF4 and Natural Capital.</p> <p>We have agreed and implemented a new streamlined application process with NatureScot for works which fall both within the protected area of a scheduled monument and of a Site of Special Scientific Interest.</p> <p>We have delivered cross-training with Peatland Action staff to ensure the historic environment is considered during peatland restoration works, and the importance of peatland restoration and techniques are better understood within our Planning, Consents and Advice Service. We are in the process of drafting non-statutory consultation protocols with Peatland Action.</p> <p>We have started the process of drafting a Managing Change in the Historic Environment publication on Landscape and the Historic Environment, which will form part of a wider programme of refreshed Managing Change Guidance.</p> <p>We are working with NatureScot in updating the current 2005 SNH-HS Concordat, which will be published once agreed. The associated Action Plan has been updated as a 'live' document.</p>
7	Review Scottish Natural Heritage's Landscape Character Assessment to ensure that the historic environment is adequately recognised and understood..	We reviewed 22 Background Chapters. In some cases, this involved considerable input of numerous staff with a range of expertise. These texts are currently being reviewed by NatureScot and are due to be published shortly.
8	Review the high number of objections for conservation area consent applications and consider how policy, guidance and capacity-building with local authorities and others can be improved upon.	We have reviewed the high number of objections for conservation area consent and identified that the applications generally failed to demonstrate that alternatives to demolition had been explored. This highlights a need for updated guidance on the management of conservation areas.

Service improvements 2021-22

Looking forward to 2021-22, there is uncertainty regarding the level of disruption that Covid-19 will continue to bring. It is hoped that the lifting of movement restrictions will enable our backlog of site visits in relation to designation, planning, consents and monitoring, to be undertaken in a safe and efficient manner. However, many challenges remain, and it is likely that our core functions will continue to be affected for much of the year to come.

Whilst much of the next reporting year will be focussed on re-establishing our core functions, we hope to also make progress in 7 key areas to ensure our service delivery is fit for purpose.

	Service improvement actions for 2021 22	Planned outputs
1	Improving our service by developing a human rights approach to our work on equality and diversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will publish the final version of Talking About Heritage. • We will update our project documentation to ensure that inclusivity is taken into account at the initiation stage of any new policy and guidance. • We will review our advice letters to ensure we use inclusive language, and improve their readability, initially a with training programme on plain English.
2	Administering our designations, advice and statutory consultation functions and scheduled monument consenting regime efficiently and transparently.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will publish and implement the findings of our joint NatureScot Customer survey. In doing so, we will review our approach with NatureScot, to ensure it is fit for purpose and relevant moving forward. • We will finalise a programme for a structured approach to revising our suite of Managing Change guidance documents and prioritising new documents where needed. The first batch will be progressed this financial year with a view to consultation, publication and monitoring. • In line with the NatureScot/HES Joint Customer Survey we will work with our focus group to look for ways to improve clarity and conciseness and look for ways to improve consistency of advice within and across HES. • We will continue to improve engagement with the designations process via release of a video about listing – ‘What is a listed building’ and an infographic on the consultation process for designations. These will be embedded in the HES Corporate website. We will seek to develop further videos to explain other designations and how people can engage with designations. • We will begin a 12-month survey of owners, occupiers and land managers of scheduled monuments, gathering feedback on the benefits of our Scheduled Monument Condition Monitoring Programme.
3	Leading HES planning response highlighting where the historic environment can make a significant contribution to a green economic recovery after the Covid-19 crisis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to support the HES corporate position on the Green Recovery and the drafting of a Statement setting out what HES contribution is and the relevance of the historic environment to supporting future inclusive growth. The resulting Green Recovery Statement is scheduled to be published late 2021/early 2022. • We will continue to identify the wider benefits of the historic environment in our advice on Green Recovery and Placemaking, highlighting where the historic environment can make a difference to social and economic outcomes.

	Service improvement actions for 2021 22	Planned outputs
4	Providing advice during the development of Scotland's National Planning Framework 4 and its incorporation of Scottish Planning Policy, as required by Scottish Government Planning and Key Agencies, and also support the implementation of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue dialogue with Scottish Government and influence the drafting of NPF4 to ensure the historic environment is considered proportionately within the planning system. We will support the delivery of the full consultation draft expected in Summer 2021 and laying before Parliament in Autumn 2021. • We will participate in Transforming Planning working groups. • We will work with Government and Key Agencies on secondary legislation and guidance to support the implementation of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. • We will consider our engagement and approach to local place plans to ensure the contribution of heritage is delivered at the right time at the right place.
5	Working with local authorities and key agencies to identify more efficient and effective working practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to support BEFS in their reconfiguration of a local authority heritage forum. • We will engage with individual local authorities to seek feedback on our service and identify areas for improvement. • We will seek to utilise remote working methods to improve efficiency in casework. • In line with the results of the NatureScot/HES Joint Customer Survey we will work with our partners to identify opportunities for more collaboration.
6	Monitoring the impact of the Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will develop a framework to monitor the effectiveness of HEPS and develop a reporting process on its performance.
7	Increasing efforts to reduce heritage crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to build strong relationships with our partner agencies – Police Scotland, Treasure Trove, Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service. • We will support the work of the Scottish Heritage Crime Group. • We will offer support to owners of scheduled monuments by providing free signage warning of the offence of damaging scheduled monuments. • We will publish guidance on the damaging effect of wild camping on scheduled monuments • We will publish guidance on the requirement for scheduled monument consent for magnet fishing on Scotland's scheduled canals and waterways. • We will begin a 12-month survey of owners, occupiers and land managers of scheduled monuments, to gather further information on the nature and extent of heritage crime across Scotland. • We will draft and consult on guidance on Heritage Crime, which will give an overview of heritage crime in Scotland and how it is tackled through a multi-agency response. • We will draft and consult on a revised version of our Metal Detecting and Scheduled Monuments - The Law leaflet which will provide updated guidance on Metal Detecting in Scotland.



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