OUR PLACE IN TIME - ANNUAL REPORT 2021
THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY FOR SCOTLAND

OUR PLACE IN TIME (OPiT) ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Contents

Operating Context

Our Place in Time (OPiT) – the historic environment strategy for Scotland – was launched in October 2014. Developed and owned by the sector, the strategy sets out a shared ten-year vision to 2024 and twelve strategic priorities. Progress in delivering OPiT is measured against a set of 13 performance indicators and reported on an annual basis.

This report covers the period from April 2020 to March 2021. It sets out the evidence for the progress that we, the historic environment sector, have made together in delivering the strategy. It has been written in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, using mainly existing information and data.

COVID-19 continues to have a profound impact on societies across the globe and its impacts are likely to be felt for many years to come. The pandemic has also had a profound impact on the sector with closures, loss of revenues, health and employment impacts on staff and volunteers, and the halting of necessary maintenance and repair projects. The wider policy context for OPiT and the sector has also changed since 2014 and, with the impacts of COVID-19, highlighted the need for review and reprioritisation. With this in mind, planning for a review of OPiT will begin over the coming year. When OPiT was first published seven years ago, it did not include an action plan or performance framework these took some time to develop. In reviewing the strategy, priority will be given to establishing actions and delivery mechanisms, as well as reviewing the performance measurement and reporting system. A value-based evaluation system – focused on outcomes and impacts – could be explored to complement the current evaluation methodology and to improve sector representation.

The Delivery Model

The Strategic Historic Environment Forum (SHEF), chaired by the Cabinet Secretary of Culture, Tourism and External Affairs, was set up in 2014 to provide strategic direction to support delivery OPiT.

The impact of COVID-19 provided a natural and timely opportunity to reconsider SHEF's purpose and ensure that the format for future meetings is as effective and productive as possible. The mid-term strategy evaluation commissioned by Historic Environment Scotland (HES) in 2019 had already identified the purpose of the Forum as an item for review. The report also highlighted the key role of SHEF and the then Cabinet Secretary's role as Chair in terms of leadership, both to OPiT and for the historic environment, and the aim is to try to retain a key Ministerial role in the revised format. However, it has also been acknowledged that more could be done to increase awareness and visibility of OPiT and its working groups, as well as its delivery progress and successes, in the wider sector and beyond.

The Scottish Government and HES continue to work together to plan the format and objectives of the Forum to allow it to play a clearer strategic role, providing a larger space for discussion and collaboration on key cross-cutting bilateral topics. The detail is still to be agreed, but it is anticipated that the revised SHEF will now take place as an annual forum event; with the first forum in this new format to take place in 2022. The OPiT CEOs Forum is responsible for ensuring momentum is maintained, identifying common threads and emerging themes, and addressing any issues in the delivery of the Strategy. Chaired by the CEO of HES, it comprises Chief Executives or equivalents from key organisations involved in the delivery of OPiT and meets bi-annually.
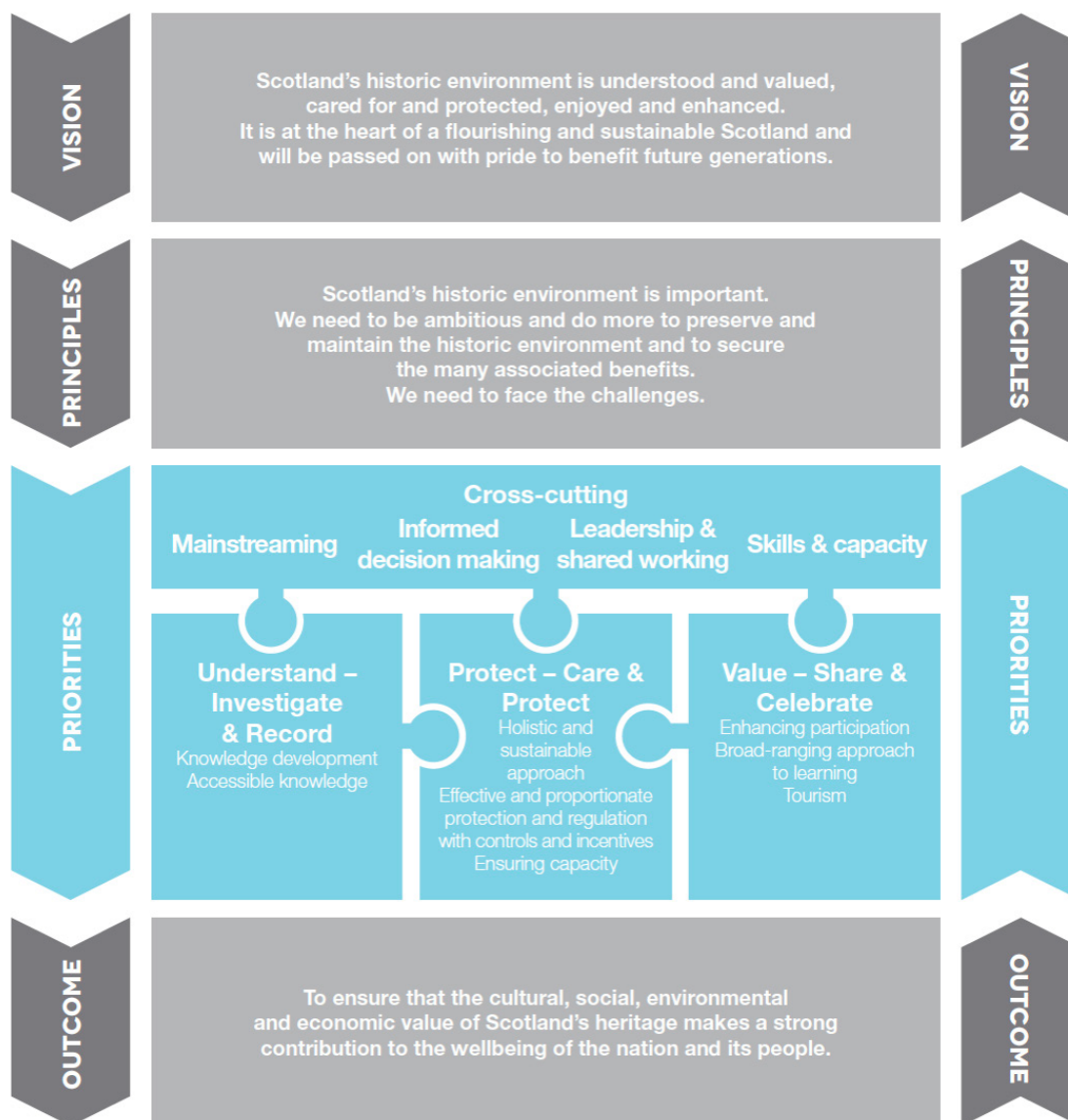
To support the delivery of OPiT strategic priorities a series of working groups were established to focus on delivering tangible outcomes and benefits for the historic environment and Scotland's people. These are: the Built Heritage Investment Group; the Climate Change Group; the Heritage Tourism Group; the Skills and Expertise Group; and the Volunteering Group.

As the lead public body for Scotland's historic environment, HES leads and enables delivery of OPiT. HES has responsibility for coordinating and supporting the OPiT working groups and for reporting on progress. In addition to the CEO's Forum, HES chairs four of the five working groups.

Further information on OPiT delivery can be found here. https://www.historicenvironment.scot/about-us/who-we-are/our-place-in-time/#delivering-the-strategy_tab

Strategy Cycle

The strategy cycle diagram below demonstrates the relationship between vision, principles, priorities and outcomes which are the key components of the OPiT strategic framework.

VISION

Scotland's historic environment is understood and valued, cared for and protected, enjoyed and enhanced.
It is at the heart of a flourishing and sustainable Scotland and will be passed on with pride to benefit future generations.

PRINCIPLES

Scotland's historic environment is important.
We need to be ambitious and do more to preserve and maintain the historic environment and to secure the many associated benefits.
We need to face the challenges.

PRIORITIES

Cross-cutting

Mainstreaming | **Informed decision making** | **Leadership & shared working** | **Skills & capacity**

Understand – Investigate & Record
Knowledge development
Accessible knowledge

Protect – Care & Protect
Holistic and sustainable approach
Effective and proportionate protection and regulation with controls and incentives
Ensuring capacity

Value – Share & Celebrate
Enhancing participation
Broad-ranging approach to learning
Tourism

OUTCOME

To ensure that the cultural, social, environmental and economic value of Scotland's heritage makes a strong contribution to the wellbeing of the nation and its people.

OPiT Measurement Framework – Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

These 13 key performance indicators (KPIs) are used to measure the success of delivering OPiT. The KPIs were developed with the sector and agreed by SHEF. .

	Priority	No	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)
Cross Cutting	**Mainstreaming**	01	Increase economic and social wellbeing benefits from the historic environment for the people of Scotland
	Mainstreaming	02	Improve the environment by reducing CO_2 emissions
	Informed decision making	03	Increasingly historic environment evidence informs policy
	Leadership and shared working	04	Increase joined up working on strategic investment across public, private and voluntary sectors
	Skills and capacity	05	Improve skills and capacity to deliver priorities
Understand	**Knowledge development**	06	Increase customer focus of knowledge created on the historic environment
	Accessible knowledge	07	Improve access to knowledge on the historic environment
Protect	**Holistic and sustainable approach**	08	Improve or maintain the state of Scotland's historic sites and places
	Effective and proportionate protection and regulation	09	Increasingly the outcomes of management, including designation, reflects what people value
	Ensuring capacity	10	Improve capacity by supporting communities through community empowerment and engagement
Value	**Enhance participation**	11	Increase the number and range of people volunteering in the historic environment
	Broad ranging approach to learning	12	Increase the number and range of people who learn about the historic environment
	Tourism	13	Increase the number and range of people visiting the historic environment

Progress with Priorities during 2020–21

The sector worked well together and continued to contribute to the success of OPiT in 2020–21, despite having to continue to make huge adjustments to respond to the ongoing impact of COVID-19 from March 2020 onwards.

This year, the performance report follows the same format as 2019–20. We want to celebrate and share successes in the delivery of OPiT in 2020–21. However, we recognise that much of the sector's energy and focus has had to be on the impact of COVID-19 and on recovery.

This year the report does not include detailed data analysis. This follows the approach taken with the 2020 report. COVID-19 has limited the data and the resource available to collect, collate and analyse it. Consequently, much of the evidence in this report is from HES, supplemented with readily available data from Scottish Government and some other published sources. The data presented is designed to be illustrative of trends in the sector and any perceived bias is unintentional. At the time of writing, many employed in the sector are still furloughed, work programmes have been put on hold or adjusted and key surveys and data reporting have been delayed or suspended. However, in keeping with previous years, we have scored each KPI as Red, Amber or Green (RAG). In doing so, we have relied on the professional judgement from analysts and policy makers, as it has proved too difficult to locate, collect, and analyse all the data we would usually use to update the RAG assessment.

In the pages that follow, we highlight a sample of achievements across the sector over the last year. These span the whole range of OPiT priorities and include reference to how the sector has worked and continues to work together to respond to the ongoing impact of COVID-19. There are many more good practice examples available on the BEFS hosted historic environment case study website.

If you wish to submit a case study you can do this at any time throughout the year, using the link above.

HES commissioned an evaluation of progress towards delivery of OPiT and published the report in December 2019. The report is available here https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationId=f7675826-2d31-4e39-a959-ab2701011940.

Performance Summary at 2021
Our Place in Time Dashboard 2021

Cross-cutting				
KPI 1	KPI 2	KPI 3	KPI 4	KPI 5

Understand		Protect			Value		
KPI 6	KPI 7	KPI 8	KPI 9	KPI 10	KPI 11	KPI 12	KPI 13

Key is on page 7

- Five of the 13 KPIs are Green (KPIs: 2, 5, 6, 7 and 9) in 2021, meaning that all these measures are currently on track to be delivered within the lifespan of the Strategy. All of these KPIs were also Green in 2020 and in 2019.

Mitigating Action

- Seven KPIs are Amber and one KPI is Red. It is anticipated that spotlighting areas that are currently at risk or forecast to be Not Met will help to inform our discussions on where the sector can focus on working together to plan for and take appropriate mitigating action during COVID-19 recovery. The aspirations of these KPIs should be revisited as part of the OPiT Strategy review.

    o **KPI 1** (Increase economic and social wellbeing benefits from the historic environment for the people of Scotland) was Green in 2019 and 2020. It is scored Amber in 2021 as the pandemic has had a very significant economic impact. Across the sector there is evidence of good work on social wellbeing impacts. However, we cannot evidence an increase in economic benefit as the sum generated for Scotland's national and regional economies from the historic environment fell by 37% in 2020 to £2.7 billion (2020 is latest available data at time of writing in July 2021). It is unlikely that the economic contribution will recover to pre-COVID-19 levels by 2024 (OPiT's end date) which means that the ambition of the KPI likely needs to be revisited.

    o **KPI 3** (Increasingly historic environment evidence informs policy) was Amber in 2019 and 2020 and remains Amber in 2021 meaning that progress has not been made as quickly as anticipated. There has been work to develop better cross-cutting portfolio connections for the historic environment in the Scottish Government to support the sector's mainstreaming agenda which will continue. There is some evidence of good engagement with key SG policy areas currently, including tourism, green agenda, and planning (NPF4 engagement). It is anticipated that more evidence will be available next year to demonstrate that the historic environment is increasingly informing policy, particularly as part of the wider recovery agenda.

    o **KPI 4** (Increase joined up working on strategic investment across public, private and voluntary sectors) was Amber in 2019 and 2020 and remains Amber in 2021 meaning that progress has not been made as quickly as anticipated. We had anticipated that KPI 4 would have progressed to green this year as the Built Heritage Investment Group (BHIG) work was making steady progress. However, that work was put on hold because of COVID-19 and it requires revisiting and reshaping in light of the pandemic and the green recovery agenda. This will be progressed in the next reporting period.

○ **KPI 8** (Improve or maintain the state of Scotland's historic sites and places) was Green in 2020 and 2019. It is scored Red in 2021 as the pandemic has had an impact on heritage conservation, repair and maintenance programmes across the sector. Exacerbated by the effects of climate change and pressures on funding, mitigating action is likely to be required in the form of remedial conservation and maintenance programmes to improve or maintain the state of Scotland's historic sites and places in the short to medium term. This work will be dependent on resources being available to carry out the work. Over the long term the sector will need to work together to deliver more joined-up, resilient and sustainable approaches. This KPI has been flagged as Red rather than Amber at this stage as it is forecast that this will be Not Met by the end of the strategy period.

○ **KPI 10** (Improve capacity by supporting communities through community empowerment and engagement) was Green in 2019 and 2020. It is scored Amber in 2021 as the pandemic has had an impact on the sector's capacity to support communities in 2021, due to lockdowns and staff furloughs. The pandemic forced us to rethink community participation and support. Thanks to the success of digital provision of workshops for communities, such as the Community Heritage Conversations (so far six events have been attended by over 470 community heritage enthusiasts and professionals), it is worth exploring how the sector can support communities going forward. A blended model, offering both in-person and virtual support, might be preferable. While acknowledging the issue of 'digital poverty', virtual community events and participation have proven to be successful in reaching new audiences and a wider geographic spread. The pandemic also highlighted the need for flexible and creative collaborations that deliver resource and knowledge sharing to support recovery and renewal plans within and across sectors. The Community Connections Programme referenced in the highlights section is an example of this.

○ **KPI 11** (Increase the number and range of people volunteering in the historic environment) was Green in 2019. It changed to Amber in 2020 and remains Amber in 2021. This reflects the impact of COVID-19, which began to immediately affect the growth and diversity of volunteers in March 2020 and has continued to do so. Sector wide mitigating action is needed, and the Mark Your Mark campaign led by the OPiT Volunteering Group partners is helping with this.

○ **KPI 12** (Increase the number and range of people who learn about the historic environment) was Green in 2019 and 2020. It is scored Amber in 2021 as the full impact of COVID-19 has been felt in 2020–21. Good work has been undertaken across the sector to provide online learning resources and to deliver virtual training sessions. However, the learning offer is not as broad or wide ranging as pre-pandemic, and work is needed to rebuild learning numbers to pre-COVID-19 levels. Sector wide mitigating action is needed and the aspirations of this KPI should be revisited.

○ **KPI 13** (Increase the number and range of people visiting the historic environment) was Green in 2019. It was changed to Amber in 2020 and remains Amber in 2021. This reflects the impact of COVID-19, which began to affect the growth and diversity of visitors immediately in March 2020 and is continuing to impact in the longer term. The full impact of COVID-19 has been felt in 2020–21. Sector wide mitigating action is needed and the aspirations of this KPI should be revisited.

Blue	**Achieved**
Light Blue	**Partially Achieved.** Evidence that most of the KPI has been delivered
Green	**On Track**
Amber	**At Risk, Action Required.** Evidence that KPI may not be met as progress not being made fast enough. Mitigating action may be required
Red	**Not met.** Forecast to be Not Met.
Grey	**Evidence Gap.** Not enough evidence to assess whether KPI is on track.

Key Performance Indicators: Results at 2021

	Priority	No	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	RAG 2017	RAG 2018	RAG 2019	RAG 2020	RAG 2021
Cross-cutting	**Mainstreaming**	01	Increase economic and social wellbeing benefits from the historic environment for the people of Scotland	Green	Green	Green	Green	Amber
	Mainstreaming	02	Improve the environment by reducing CO2 emissions	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
	Informed decision making	03	Increasingly historic environment evidence informs policy	Evidence Gap	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber
	Leadership & shared working	04	Increase joined up working on strategic investment across public, private and voluntary sectors	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber
	Skills & capacity	05	Improve skills and capacity to deliver priorities	Amber	Green	Green	Green	Green
Understand	**Knowledge development**	06	Increase customer focus of knowledge created on the historic environment	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
	Accessible knowledge	07	Improve access to knowledge on the historic environment	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Protect	**Holistic and sustainable approach**	08	Improve or maintain the state of Scotland's historic sites and places	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red
	Effective & proportionate protection and regulation	09	Increasingly the outcomes of management, including designation, reflects what people value	Evidence Gap	Green	Green	Green	Green
	Ensuring capacity	10	Improve capacity by supporting communities through community empowerment and engagement	Evidence Gap	Green	Green	Green	Amber
Value	**Enhance participation**	11	Increase the number and range of people volunteering in the historic environment	Green	Green	Green	Amber	Amber
	Broad ranging approach to learning	12	Increase the number and range of people who learn about the historic environment	Green	Green	Green	Green	Amber
	Tourism	13	Increase the number and range of people visiting the historic environment	Green	Green	Green	Amber	Amber

Key on Page 7

Highlights

The sector worked well together and accomplished a great deal in 2020–21, despite having to make significant adjustments to keep responding to the impact of COVID-19. Five of the 13 Key Performance Indicators are on track for delivery. The remaining eight have been particularly impacted by the pandemic, highlighting the importance of ongoing cross sector collaboration to aid recovery. Published findings from surveys by MGS, NHLF, HES and others into the impact of the pandemic on the heritage sector have also being used to inform action to support long-term recovery.

Our collective success over the year spans the full range of OPiT priorities. This has included quickly transforming the way the sector works to respond to lockdown and restrictions in place, supporting people, working together to collectively support each other across the sector, maintaining service delivery where possible and using our voices to amplify the growing call for a recovery that benefits everyone. In the pages that follow is a small sample of what the sector has achieved together is provided. More examples can be found on BEFS website at www.befs.org.uk.

Cross Cutting Strategic – Highlights

Increasing benefits from the historic environment – mainstreaming (KPI 1)

The sector has worked together to ensure that the cultural, social, environmental and economic value of our heritage continues to contribute to the nation's wellbeing, even during the unprecedented and ongoing impact of COVID-19. However, we cannot evidence we have increased the amount generated from Scotland's national and regional economies from the historic environment. The historic environment **generated an estimated £2.7bn for Scotland's economy** in 2020 (£4.4 bn in 2019, £4.2bn in 2018, £3.6 bn in 2015). The economic impact of the historic environment fell 37% during 2020. This was driven by an 80% fall in tourism impact due to COVID-19 closures and travel restrictions. All three tourism sub-markets collapsed: international, domestic overnight and day visitors. While there were some domestic visitors during the weeks that attractions were open and travel permitted, they are a far lower spending (and net impact) group than international visitors. In the construction industry, repair and maintenance of historic buildings fell 8%, though this was concentrated during the first lockdown (quarter 2) when non-essential works were prohibited, recovering later in the year to trend levels once restrictions were reduced. Investment in both public and private residential works increased in the second half of the year (though were still down 7% on 2019), while investment in non-residential works remained low throughout the year, falling by 23% compared to 2019.

Research, like the Links between Scotland's Historic Environment and Wellbeing report is being applied to support the decision making. For example, wellbeing research data is being used to track the links between different types of grants to wellbeing outcomes to inform the evaluation of grants for Conservation Area Regeneration Schemes and the design of HES's new grants programme. Data is informing development of case studies on how wellbeing links to future designation decisions and variations in the survey responses from different groups have been used to inform equalities outcomes and actions.

Improve the environment by reducing CO2 emissions (KPI 2)

The sector continued reducing greenhouse gas emissions in this period and has worked collaboratively to prepare an offer for COP26, in Glasgow in November 2021. MGS is involved in the Creative Carbon Scotland-run Climate Beacons for COP26, a collaborative scheme between climate change and environmental organisations and arts, heritage and cultural organisations.

HES has continued as Co-Chair the International Steering Committee for the Climate Heritage Network, and supported the sector through the publication of refurbishment case studies, technical papers and blog articles and the delivery of energy efficiency and retrofit training and events. The Holyrood Park Lodge Refurbishment Case Study and Technical Papers on baseline energy consumption and moisture monitoring in traditional buildings have been published. A new qualification in traditional building retrofit has been developed during this time and is due for launch in October 2021. HES has reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 54.6% against the 2014–15 baseline.

Informed decision making – Increasingly the historic environment informs policy (KPI 3)

Key funders and organisations in the sector, including HES, National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF), and Museum Galleries Scotland (MGS), have provided evidence to the Scottish Parliament's Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Affairs Committee to inform its understanding of the impact of the pandemic on Scotland's culture and tourism industries, the support required and how the sector can contribute to recovery.

Pandemic impact surveys have been undertaken HES, the Historic Houses Association MGS, and the NLHF highlighting key impacts and risks, and identifying potential interventions required to sustain the sector. HES ran two sector surveys during 2020-21 sharing and discussing results and impacts with sector partners and Scottish Government through the OPiT CEOs Forum and other means.

The link between heritage, spatial planning and economic recovery has been strengthened. Following inputs from the sector to the open consultations, the Scottish Government's National Planning Framework (NPF4) and Infrastructure Investment Plan now include a presumption towards re-using existing built stock before considering new build. A new evidence base is being developed around areas' reliance on local historic built stock to deliver economic activity and meet new space demand for changing and expanding industries over the coming decade. The sector is aiming to formally integrate this into local spatial planning through relationships with Local Authority economic development departments and the City Deals to best meet NPF4.

Leadership and shared working (KPI 4)

Heritage sector partners have supported the work of the National Partnership for Culture, including the National Trust for Scotland (NTS) supporting the early work of its Measuring Success workstream), alongside representatives from other culture sector agencies and stakeholders. Linked to this, HES is working with the Scottish Government's Natural Capital team and NatureScot developing a model to better integrate heritage into the current national performance indicator as part of a wider group including health, transport, environmental and local planning partners. The holistic approach aims to better understand the implications of policy and spatial changes across economic, environmental, social and cultural indicators.

Lead historic environment bodies from across the UK have formed a 5 Nations Wellbeing Group to share research and practical delivery of heritage interventions to improve wellbeing, working towards a best practice shared approach.

HES, the NTS, MGS and other sector organisations have been working with Skills Development Scotland, Scottish Funding Council, Colleges Scotland and other partners to deliver the historic environment sector Skills Investment Plan and ensure that it is consistent with the national approach for other sectors.

Visit Scotland, Historic Houses Scotland, NTS, MGS and HES continue to work together through the Heritage Tourism Group to develop Scotland's strategy for a regionally-balanced, sustainable, and responsible approach to tourism.

HES is working with seven Growth Deal programmes across Scotland to support local authorities in their strategic investment plans where heritage can make a key contribution to economic growth and recovery.

Skills and capacity (KPI 5)

The sector continued to work together with Skills Development Scotland, Scottish Funding Council and other delivery partners from other sectors such as education, construction, tourism and creative industries to enhance investment in skills development, delivering year two (year one 2019–20) of the historic environment sector Skills Investment Plan and investing in workforce development roles. (HES, 48 in 2020–21, down 26 from 74 in 2019–20, down 2 from 50 in 2017–18; NTS, 7 in 2020–21, same as in 2018–19, up from 3 in 2017–18; Glasgow Life, 4 in 2020–21).

Despite disruptions there has been a great deal of activity delivered by Skills Investment Plan partners, with 75% of actions in the delivery plan in progress and 12% complete. The SIP is a multi-year plan with actions refreshed annually to reflect shifting circumstances; the majority of the 75% of actions that are in progress are not intended to be completed in a year.

Understand – Highlights

Knowledge and development (KPI 6)

The sector has continued to effectively work together to ensure that Scotland's historic environment is better known and understood. Increased understanding of the historic environment was delivered in 2020–21 through investigation, research and recording activities, adding to Scotland's National Record of the Historic Environment, sharing knowledge, and by investigating ways to improve digital access to information and data.

Due to COVID-19 many activities have been put on hold or undertaken in a different way. However, the examples below illustrate just a few highlights and context for our understanding.

Understanding of the historic environment is informed by more than 2 million pieces of heritage information (around 2.4 million in 2021, up from around 2 million in 2019–20, up from around 1.5 million in 2014). As at 2021, this comprises around 341,000 site records (up from 338,000 in 2020 and 336,000 in 2019) and over 1.8 million in the Archives (National Collections Catalogue) (up from 1.6 million in 2020 and 1.5 million in 2019) of the National Record of the Historic Environment in Scotland (Canmore), and over 350,000 local authority records historic environment/scheduled monument records (estimated to be up from 300,000 in 2019–20). Around 1 in 5 (479,000 in 2019, the latest available) of Scotland's dwellings are over 102 years old (built pre-1919). Online records have been available during COVID-19.

The historic environment comprises more than 56,000 protected places:
- 6 world heritage sites
- 8,000 scheduled monuments
- 47,000 listed buildings
- 365 gardens and designed landscapes
- 8 marine protected areas
- 669 conservation areas
- 40 historic battlefields
- 40 national scenic areas
- 2 national parks

Accessible knowledge (KPI 7)

During 2020–21 there were several examples of improving access to knowledge on the historic environment. The move to digital has improved opportunities for promotion and engaging with wider audiences. The sector has continued to invest in research and innovation and worked with partners to deliver impactful outcomes.

- **HES** and **University College London** formalised a science and technology partnership working with in a Memorandum of Understanding in 2021. **Monument Monitor** is one example of this partnership, which is a citizen-science approach to help monitor condition at 20 properties in the care of HES, by asking visitors to submit photographs of conservation issues and heritage crime.
- The Scottish Government's **Dynamic Coast project** led by **NatureScot** and **University of Glasgow** uses 3D laser scan data of Skara Brae provided by HES to monitor coastal change.
- **NTS** and **HES** partnered to deliver a multi-year science and digital innovation project at the Hill House. This involves digitally documenting the site and carrying out moisture mapping and thermographic surveys, with data shared in 3D environments.
- **MGS, Creative Scotland, HES** and **TRACS** commissioned a research project to understand Intangible Cultural Heritage in Scotland to explore how they and other potential partner organisations can work together to better safeguard and collect it.

Care and Protect – Highlights

Improve or maintain the state of Scotland's historic sites and places (KPI 8) maintain the state of Scotland's historic sites and places (KPI 8)

It is forecast that the KPI is Red and will be Not Met. The full impact of the pandemic was felt in 2020–21 and affected conservation and maintenance across the sector. Exacerbated by the climate change impacts and pressures on funding, mitigating action is required to put in place remedial conservation and maintenance programmes to improve or maintain the state of Scotland's historic sites and places in the short to medium term. Longer term the sector will need to work together to deliver a holistic and sustainable approach to the maintain sector resilience, and the aspirations of this KPI should be revisited.

Data from the Scottish House Condition Survey (SHCS) and the Buildings at Risk Register (BARR) provide some contextual information for this KPI.

The latest available SHCS data is from 2019 shows that **the rate of disrepair to critical elements for pre-1919 dwellings** did not change significantly between 2017 (68%), 2018 (73%) and 2019 (71%) and is within the survey's margin of error. The figure was 72% in 2014. In general, the prevalence of disrepair to critical elements is associated with age of construction. The impact of COVID-19 on delayed repair and maintenance regimes in 2020–21 is likely to be seen in later years.

BARR shows that at 31 March 2021, 2,265 buildings were assessed as being 'At Risk'; 242 were assessed as Restoration in Progress, 32 were saved and 23 demolished. During 2019–20, 87 buildings were saved and 39 demolished and during 2018–19, 229 were in the process of being restored and 83 buildings were saved. The number of saved buildings is lower in 2020–21 than in previous years; however, note that HES were unable to carry out the normal fieldwork programme due to travel restrictions and furlough. A number of development projects were subject to delay or stalled due to the pandemic. Summary data estimate that almost 900 historic buildings on BARR have been saved between 2009 and 2021. Looking at the longer term, 1,956 historic buildings on BARR have been saved between 1990 and 2021 and 592 demolished.

Estimated repair and maintenance investment in historic buildings (based on the quarterly Office of National Statistics (ONS) survey of output in the construction industry) fell 8% during 2020. However this was concentrated during the first lockdown (quarter 2) when non-essential works were prohibited, quickly recovering later in the year to trend levels once restrictions were reduced. Investment in both public and private residential works increased in the second half of 2020 and first half of 2021, likely driven by two key trends: people increasingly working from home and adapting their properties accordingly; and the increased national savings rate being re-invested in residential property while other consumer services were unavailable. In contrast, non-residential works remained low throughout the year, falling by 23% compared to 2019.

Effective and proportionate protection and regulation (KPI 9)

The sector continued to work together to apply effective and proportionate regulation and to play an efficient role in the planning system. In 2020–21, HES dealt with 96% of regulatory cases within timescales, compared to 96% in 2019–20. The latest Planning Performance Report 2020–21 | Historic Environment Scotland

The Key Agencies Group published a joint position statement in response to the Scottish Government Call for Ideas to inform development of the new National Planning Framework 4. Members have continued to engage with NPF4 with HES working to ensure the interests of the historic environment are considered.

Improve capacity by supporting communities through community empowerment and engagement (KPI 10)

The sector has worked to improve capacity by supporting communities through community empowerment and engagement.

Throughout the year the sector has worked together to deliver a range of projects from the Make Your Mark Volunteering Campaign, a Volunteers Week Big Pub Quiz, Community Heritage Conversations, and the introduction of a Community Connections Forum.

The HES-led multi-partner Communities Action Plan is helping communities use their heritage as a catalyst for a recovery that has wellbeing and sustainability at its heart. It is being delivered through engagement with the Community Connections Programme. Website resources provide communities with advice and guidance on asset ownership, funding and planning.

Value: Share and Celebrate – Highlights

Enhance participation – volunteering (KPI 11)

The overall number of people volunteering in the historic environment decreased between 2019–20 and 2020–21, due to the impact of COVID-19. For example, the NTS had 2,118 active volunteers 2020–21 and 2,784 in 2019–20, down 24%. HES had 28 Volunteers in 2020–21, down from 999 in 2019–20.

The sector has worked hard to provide heritage volunteering for all in Scotland. The Make Your Mark (MYM) in volunteering campaign (makeyourmark.scot) aims to grow the number and diversity of heritage volunteers in Scotland. MYM is supported and managed by the OPiT Volunteering Group. It was launched on 4 December 2020 and it is hoped that the full impact of its work will be seen in 2021 onwards. Inclusive heritage volunteering is at the heart of the campaign which recognises the lack of diversity and issues of unequal access to the sector. With COVID-19, MYM's goals have become more relevant – not only has the pandemic deepened inequality, it has also created new challenges for heritage volunteering limiting in-person volunteering while highlighting the potential of digital volunteering. Sector surveys during the pandemic have highlighted the reliance of many smaller organisations on their volunteers and shown that many have concerns about their health (often link to age profile) and whether they will wish to or have the confidence to return.

Broad ranging approach to learning (KPI 12)

While the pandemic impacted on opportunities to visit sites and engage in in-person activity, it has also provided opportunities to re-imagine the learning offer and engage with audiences in new ways.

Despite the challenges of the last year and the pandemic's impact on learning visits and site-based activity, the sector continued to support inclusive access to heritage resources to inspire learners of all ages. Providers across the sector worked well to offer creative and inclusive approaches to learning. With sites closed, partnership projects enabled participative activity to continue digitally, co-designing content with learners and promoting wider awareness amongst target audiences. An inclusive approach saw the delivery of diverse activity including video production workshops for schools in rural and deprived areas, 'escape room' experiences for young carers, reminiscence sessions for dementia groups and storytelling for family food poverty programmes. These approaches enabled engaging and meaningful opportunities to participate.

Supporting young people is a COVID-19 recovery priority and the sector continued re-adjusting youth engagement programmes, focused on wellbeing, on re-connecting with young people, and on skills development. So, while the number of people able to physically engage in activities decreased, those who engaged digitally increased significantly. Looking forward the sector will build on these opportunities to develop an inclusive blended offer that engages diverse audiences through digital and in-person programmes.

Some project examples are provided below:

- **Dunfermline Past-Port** was an initiative where the Carnegie Museum, Dunfermline Library and HES worked in partnership to provide linked educational opportunities for children and young people during school holidays. Around 200 children and young people took part and increased their knowledge of the historic environment.
- **Learn, Create & Play** webpages, building on the success of 'Learn at Home' to help home educators and learners to access freely available new and existing digital resources and learning materials.
- **Engaging young people** – **#HistoricScot Youth Forum** is a partnership project between HES and Young Scot. The partnership, which began in July 2019 and was due to end in June 2021, has been extended to June 2022 with the aim of co-designing a young people action plan. #HistoricScot comprises a diverse group of 35 young volunteers aged 12–25 years from across Scotland. #HistoricScot has engaged extensively with the work of HES and the sector during 2020–21.

Tourism (KPI 13)

The sector has worked hard to provide quality visitor experiences throughout the pandemic. We responded to a fast-changing situation to keep our staff, volunteers, visitors and contractors safe. We closed sites when we needed to and reopened with the appropriate public health measures in place when it was safe to do so. The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted visitors to heritage sites and the sector has worked creatively to continue to offer opportunities for people to engage with heritage in 2020–21. A level of uncertainty remains, particularly around the restart of the tourism industry, as we look to the immediate future. The sector will need to continue to prioritise resources and provide support to each other. For the most part of 2019–20 the number and range of visitors to heritage continued at healthy levels. However, by 2020–21 the full impact of COVID-19 was felt in relation to visitors.

The overall number and range of people visiting the historic environment decreased between 2019–20 and 2020–21, as did member numbers. The data below, for the NTS and HES illustrate this:

- **Visitors:** NTS had 1.5 million visitors in 2020–21, down 63% from 4.1 million in 2019–20. Of these, 0.5 million were visitors to gated properties, down 81% from 2.6 million in 2019–20. HES had 0.25 million visitors to staffed sites in 2020–21, down 95% from 5.2 million in 2019–20 (only 26 of HES 73 staffed sites had footfall in 2020–21).
- **Members:** NTS had 309,871 members in 2020–21, down from 353,768 in 2019–20 and 367,000 in 2018–19. HES had 186,000 members in 2020–21, down from 206,455 in 2019–20 and 204,000 in 2018–19.

Strategy Working Groups Progress

Built Heritage Investment Group

In April 2020, the Built Heritage Investment Group (BHIG) agreed to pause the consultation on both the Built Heritage Investment Plan and the Sustainable Investment Toolkit (SIT) due to the unprecedented impacts and uncertainties brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. Development of the SIT was announced on the BEFS website in May 2020. BEFS are a lead partner on prioritisation work for the built and historic environment.

In July 2020, the BHIG met to discuss what the current situation looked like for the members and what the medium- and long-term implications of COVID-19 might be on the sector, specifically in relation to built heritage. Members recommended a unified OPiT response to green recovery and for all OPiT groups to jointly voice their concerns for the sector in the context of COVID-19.

A draft outline of the Plan was presented to the BHIG for discussion and input in March 2021. Following feedback, a second draft will be circulated to members in the next reporting period.

Looking ahead, the BHIG acknowledges the changed landscape within which all OPiT groups are now operating and recognises the importance of alignment with the OPiT Climate Change group to clearly demonstrate the value that the historic environment and sustainable investment in built heritage has for Scotland, in particular the contribution it can make to green recovery. The launch of an early draft NPF4 in early 2020 put the presumption towards re-use and adaptation of existing buildings, which will be a focus of the BHIG going ahead.

Climate Change Group

In April 2020, the Climate Change Group (CCG) agreed to pause its work because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The key challenge over the period has been identifying how the CCG and member organisations can best contribute to climate goals while supporting a national recovery from COVID-19.

Looking ahead, the CCG recognises the urgency of a sector approach to the climate emergency and a consistent methodology for reporting and demonstrating against Scotland's National Performance indicators and sustainable development goals.

The CCG also sees the opportunity to collectively build on what has already been achieved and to more closely align with the work of the other OPiT groups, in particular, supporting the work of the OPiT Built Heritage Investment Group through the development of the Built Heritage Investment Plan, and the OPiT Skills and Expertise Group through the delivery of the sector Skills Investment Plan.

Multi-partner engagement focused on COP26 commenced in spring 2020. Looking ahead, the CCG will take forward the legacy of COP26.

Skills and Expertise Group

Skills is one of the cross-cutting priorities and as such supports the agendas of all the working groups. Predominantly the group delivers against the OPiT strategic priority to develop the skills and capacity needed at all levels to understand, care for and celebrate the historic environment.

2020–21 was focused on delivering the sector Skills Investment Plan (SIP) action plan that was published in 2019. Due to the impacts of COVID-19 on delivery and restrictions on activity, some projects have been delayed and some activity has been put on hold. New programmes have been developed in response to COVID-19 and some activity has had to move online. Despite disruptions there has been a great deal of activity delivered by SIP partners, with 75% of the multi-year actions in the delivery plan in progress and 12% complete.

Three cross-sector delivery groups have been established to focus on improving access, attracting future talent and mainstreaming historic built environment skills. An online Future Skills Summit took place in March 2021 with 51 attendees participating in the future planning of the SIP in the key areas of heritage tourism, historic built

environment skills and economic development. A communication plan was created, and access was gained to Skills Development Scotland (SDS) labour market information data to establish a baseline to support the delivery of the SIP.

As well as COVID-19 recovery, this year has focused on consolidating activity and mainstreaming heritage skills, by working with Skills Development Scotland, skills bodies and sector partners to develop modern apprenticeship pathways and frameworks for the sector. Sector partners also developed a heritage approach to the Kickstart programme, and reviewed the Craft Design Technology National 4, led by Construction Scotland.

Currently, the City of Glasgow College, HES, NTS and Glasgow Life are working together on how sustainable tourism, heritage skills and context can be embedded in HNC/HND provision from August 2021.

Heritage Tourism Group

The Heritage Tourism Group's (HTG) focus in 2020–21 has been on the impacts of the pandemic on the heritage tourism sector and the pathways to recovery – both issues also took centre stage during the COVID Historic Environment Resilience Forum (CHERF) workshops hosted by BEFS. The COVID-19 crisis resulted in sites closures for more than seven months between April 2020 and March 2021, and reduced income, for all the organisations represented on the group.

Due to the impact of COVID-19 and the first lockdown, the attraction and accommodation sectors experienced a collapse from mid-March 2020 to July 2020. There was some recovery of up to 40% in July–October 2020, but since then, with a new national lockdown in January 2021, these sectors have been seeing further retraction.

The HTG discussed how the needs of the sector could be addressed by the Scottish Tourism Emergency Response Group (STERG). This was restored by VisitScotland to coordinate activity among the public sector, as national focus shifted from the delivery of Outlook 2030 to supporting the STERG National Action Plan, which aligns with Outlook 2030 and the four stages of recovery.

The HTG expects more continued support to the industry into next season. While international travel and the airline industry will not be as accessible, and therefore the footfall will be significantly reduced, marketing activity for the historic environment could focus more on domestic and Scottish-only campaigns, with an emphasis on local and green tourism. The Year of Coasts and Waters, which was re-confirmed for 2021, offers good opportunities for promotion of sustainable, local eco-tourism for the heritage sector.

Volunteering Working Group

Throughout 2020–21 the OPiT Volunteering Working Group continued to focus on further development of the Make Your Mark Volunteer Participation Campaign (MYM). Linking to OPiT goals, MYM is an exciting new initiative that can make a positive impact in inclusive volunteering, foster new partnerships, and provide support to volunteer involving organisations and volunteer organisers.

In 2020 survey data and insights gathered by a range of organisations highlighted that many volunteer programmes were immediately halted and the impact on organisational volunteering numbers and personal volunteering preferences cannot be fully understood yet.

In response to COVID-19 the project team moved to a digital delivery model. At March 2021, 37 heritage organisations had signed up to the campaign with numbers steadily growing (47 in September 2021). A new Volunteer Organisers Network (VON) was launched, a series of 'knowledge share' events have been developed and new partnerships formed with organisations such as the Heritage Volunteering Group, the Eden Project Communities and a new AHRC-funded project addressing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Scottish heritage.

 MYM is therefore providing resources to understand the changes to volunteer circumstances and support the safe return of volunteers. MYM will deliver a sector wider volunteer recruitment campaign to support organisations who may experience a drop in volunteer numbers and to also encourage those new to volunteering to consider a heritage setting.

Looking Ahead

COVID-19 has challenged the resilience and sustainability of the sector; with the loss of revenues, impacts on staff and volunteers, and the delay to repair and maintenance works causing significant problems. The sector focused on responding to the crisis by accessing government schemes and emergency funds, reprioritising activity, looking to opportunities to pivot their businesses, and planning for resumption of activities.

As we look to the future, the sector is mindful of the need to refresh OPiT and how its success is measured and reported so that it is fit for a post COVID-19 world. The strategic context has changed considerably since OPiT publication seven years ago with, for example, increased focus on tackling inequality, on community empowerment, on digital, and on the climate emergency. At the time of writing, it is widely acknowledged by OPiT delivery partners that there is a need to undertake a strategic review of OPiT. This work will begin in the next period. Some of the current OPiT strategic priorities will likely remain relevant, and it is also likely that the working groups are still relevant. However, these should be reviewed against a changed context; already some potentially new priority areas for focus have been identified by the 2019 evaluation and through CHERF, including equality and diversity, young people, and communities. Any review will also need to prioritise activity that supports recovery and renewal, that focuses on creating a more resilient and sustainable sector, and that helps to communicate the contribution that the historic environment makes to the wellbeing of Scotland's people.

In reviewing the OPiT strategy, priority should be given to establishing actions, delivery mechanisms, and responsibilities. There is also potential to review OPiT performance reporting which has – due to data collection challenges - struggled to represent the breadth of the sector. A value-based evaluation system focused on a smaller number of outcomes and impacts could be explored to complement the current evaluation methodology.

Further information on OPiT, the Historic Environment strategy for Scotland can be found via the following link
https://www.historicenvironment.scot/about-us/who-we-are/our-place-in-time/

Case studies are available to view and submit on BEFS website at www.befs.org.uk

With thanks to all those who contributed to this report.

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