



HISTORIC
ENVIRONMENT
SCOTLAND

ÀRAINNEACHD
EACHDRAIDHEIL
ALBA

Equality Outcomes Report 2025 to 2029



Easy Read



Introduction



This is an Easy Read document.

It will tell you about our **Equalities Outcomes**.



Equality means giving people the same choices and chances.

An **outcome** is something we want to happen.



This report shows the work we have done on our Equalities Outcomes between April 2023 and March 2025.



It also says what our Equality Outcomes for 2025 to 2029 will be and what work we will do.

About us

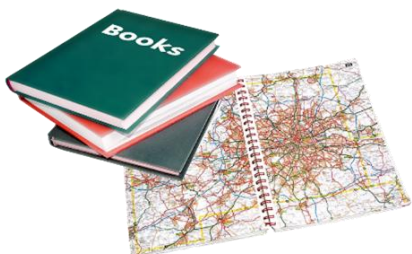


Historic Environment Scotland is the main organisation that looks after Scotland's **historic environment** and tells people about it.



The **historic environment** is:

- places and things that show us what happened in the past, like a castle or garden, or things like books or maps
- **cultural heritage** like stories, crafts, and **traditions** – thinking or behaviour that has happened for a long time



Historic Environment Scotland has the chance to lead the way in:

- making a difference on equalities and rights issues





- making sure the historic environment is:
 - **inclusive** - everyone can take part and have the same chance
 - **accessible** - is available and usable by everyone



In our Heritage for All plan we want to see a Scotland where the historic environment is loved, understood, shared, and enjoyed by everyone.

We want Scotland's history to be important to everyone in the country.



Our Past, Our Future is a national **strategy** for 5 years – from 2023 to 2028 – for all the organisations that work on the historic environment in Scotland.

A **strategy** is a big plan.

Delivery and governance



Delivery is how we make work happen.

Governance is the rules about ways of working and how decisions are made in an organisation.



We deliver our equality outcomes through the work in our Equality Action Plan.



Our 7 employee networks:

- provide safe spaces for groups that are often not listened to in society
- help to make change happen



HES follows the rules in the Equality Act 2010.

Part 1: What work have we done on equality in Historic Environment Scotland from 2023 to 2025?

What work did we do on Equality Outcome 1?

Our society- we make a real difference in people's lives



- **Community Connections**

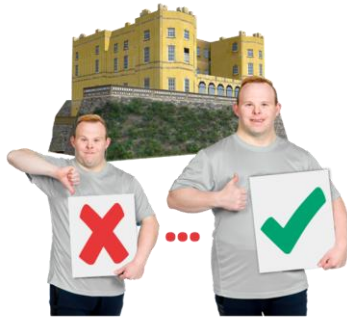
Communities are groups of people who belong to the same group or live in the same area.

We have strengthened our work with local communities and heritage organisations through:



- events to share what we know
- projects led by communities
- work about:
 - **wellbeing** - feeling comfortable, healthy and happy
 - **volunteering** – volunteers choose to work or help out and do not get paid





- **regeneration** – making places better and bringing them back to life

- **Make Your Mark Campaign**

This campaign encouraged **underrepresented** groups to volunteer in the heritage sector.

Underrepresented means people or groups that are often not listened to in society.



Over 100 heritage organisations joined the campaign and:

- shared more than 150 inclusive volunteering resources
- started a **recruitment** campaign - advertising jobs and choosing people to do them





○ Youth Action Plan

We worked with Young Scot to get young people involved in talking about heritage and making decisions.



A Youth Participation Officer has made sure the plan is delivered and keeps young people involved in our work.

What work did we do on Equality Outcome 2?

Our services - we have services that give diverse groups what they need and want.



Diverse means having a mix of different kinds of people.

In the last 2 years we have:

- linked with new audiences
- worked with communities who had not linked with Scotland's heritage



Our achievements include:

Working with different communities

- **Picturing Our Past**

This 3 year project worked with 11 community groups from **deprived areas**, particularly disabled people, using photography workshops and photo walks.



A **deprived area** is one where many of the people who live there do not have:

- enough money
- choices and chances
- **resources** – there might not be as many public services



- **Managing Imperial Legacies Project**

This project at Edinburgh Castle looked at Scotland's links to Zimbabwe.



An **imperial legacy** is how the country has dealt with the time when it was ruled by Britain.



- **Creative Caerlaverock**

This project worked with underrepresented young people to have a Dungeons and Dragons live roleplaying event at the castle.



Work to encourage certain groups to take part

- **Young Scot £1**

This has made heritage sites more accessible to young people.



- **Historic Sundays**

This started in 2023 and gives people living in Scotland free entry to HES sites.



- **Sensory backpacks**

Our biggest sites support **neurodivergent** visitors by providing tools like earplugs, tactile toys, and sensory maps to make their visit more accessible.



Neurodivergent means people whose brains are organised in a different way.

For example people who have autism, learning disability, ADHD or dyslexia.

Employment and training projects



- **Apprenticeships and training**

We supported 51 apprentices giving them ways into a career in the heritage sector.

- **New Museum School Programme**

We sponsored postgraduate-level training for people from diverse backgrounds underrepresented in the sector.

Postgraduate means a student who has completed a degree course.



- **Celebrating Success Event**

This recognised the contributions of apprentices and trainees.



Research and interpretation



- **Properties in care and British Empire research**

This research found 126 HES properties had connections to **colonial histories** – where one country takes control of another and unfairly uses its people and resources.

Inclusive publications and visibility – being seen



Research has supported us to make sure we have diverse voices in:

- our publications
- information at our sites
- our educational programmes



- making our online information better has meant that BSL users, neurodivergent people and people who need different languages can get HES materials

What work did we do on Equality Outcome 3?

Our people - we attract, recruit, and develop a diverse Board, workforce, and volunteer base



Accreditation shows we have met certain standards.

In the last 2 years we have:

- **achieved inclusive workplace accreditation**
 - Menopause Friendly Accreditation - meeting standards in culture, policies, training and support
 - Disability Confident Level 3 Accreditation showing leadership in disability inclusion and that we have a recruitment process that treats everyone equally
- **strengthened employee networks**



Our 7 employee forums have **budgets** – money to spend – and employees have support from our senior leaders.



- **flexible and inclusive workplace**

We have made our **flexible working** arrangements better.

Flexible working is a way of working that suits an employee's needs.

Part 2: Our Equality Outcomes from 2025 to 2029

How did we make our new equality outcomes?



Since publishing our 2021 to 2025 Equality Outcomes we have realised that we must:

- give people power and listen to them
- build trust with communities
- work to include diverse voices



To do this we:

- used questionnaires, forums and our Equality Champions to get many different points of view and ideas



- listened to the views of community groups, employees, and organisations that support us



- linked with underrepresented communities at accessible site visits

People who took part:



- told us what stopped them from feeling included
- told us what they thought about our objectives
- gave us ideas to get communities involved in the historic environment



We worked with diverse communities to make sure our equality outcomes reflect the people of Scotland.

What work will we do on Equality Outcome 1?

Outcome 1: Our Society- giving underrepresented communities the power to make change happen and promote equality and justice



We will:

- make a Community Engagement Framework - a plan so communities can take part equally and fairly



- have more ways for diverse communities and underrepresented groups to get grant funding



- have stronger partnerships with community-led initiatives and heritage organisations

- start the Gaelic Language Plan and tell more people about it



- get more people from diverse groups to be volunteers
- have more stories and information from underrepresented groups

What work will we do on Equality Outcome 2?

Our services: Take away things that stop people from accessing our sites and the work we do

Have more ways for people to take part and be included

We will:

- make our sites more accessible including:
 - interpretation in different languages
 - online information
- have more free and discounted entry programmes
- have better learning resources
- work with more schools and youth groups to tell diverse heritage stories
- have more events at heritage sites that include disabled people



What work will we do on Equality Outcome 3?

Our people - Creating a truly diverse and inclusive culture where individuals feel valued and supported.



We will:

- have an **Equality Audit** – a check of:
 - recruitment policies
 - **workplace culture** - the environment we create for our employees and the attitudes, values and behaviours of our organisation



- have more leadership development programmes for **marginalised groups** - people who might be forgotten about or left out of making decisions



- have Equality Ambassadors to encourage awareness and advocacy



- have inclusive training including:
 - **unconscious bias** training

Unconscious bias is when people make unfair choices without realising.

- anti-racism workshops



- have better **mentorship** programs

A **mentor** is someone who teaches or gives help and advice to a less experienced person.



- develop ways for our employees to move on in their careers with us

This will make sure there are no things that make it difficult for underrepresented employees.



- have plans that look at how our policies and laws affect people and their different identities

Implementation and monitoring – how we do the work and check it is going well



We will do this by using:

- **Annual Equality Action Plans**

These will give detailed information about projects and how we will check if work is going well.



- **Quarterly People Committee Reviews**

Every 3 months these check how well our plans are going and what could be better.

- **Equality Reports** every 2 years

These reports will include:

- give details of the **pay gap** - the difference in average earnings between different groups
- information about how diverse our workforce is





- **stakeholder engagement sessions** - to listen to people's views and ideas and use them to change how we work
- work with people in all parts of our organisation to make sure equality is at the centre of all our work

Reporting – being honest and open about our work



We will:

- publish progress reports every 2 years to show how we are following **public sector equality duties**

This shows how our work supports equality and treats everyone fairly.



- keep working with the Equality Champions Group and other partner organisations
- an Inclusive Heritage Launch Event in Spring 2025 will show what work is going well and encourage people to work with us

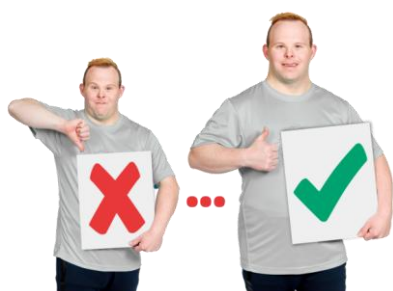


...and finally...



By working in ways that are inclusive and accessible we make sure that Scotland's historic environment is for everyone.

We will continue to:



- check and change the way we work to make it better

- learn from communities



- work for a future that treats people equally and fairly