OUR PLACE IN TIME - ANNUAL REPORT 2020
THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY FOR SCOTLAND

OUR PLACE IN TIME (OPiT) ANNUAL REPORT 2020

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 thirteen performance indicators and reported on an annual basis.

This report covers the period of April 2019 to March 2020. It sets out the evidence for the progress that we, the historic environment sector, have made together in delivering the strategy.

This report was written in the context of the COVID-19 crisis, using mainly existing information and data. Looking forward, we are planning to integrate this information with new data to continue monitoring the sector in these challenging times towards recovery.
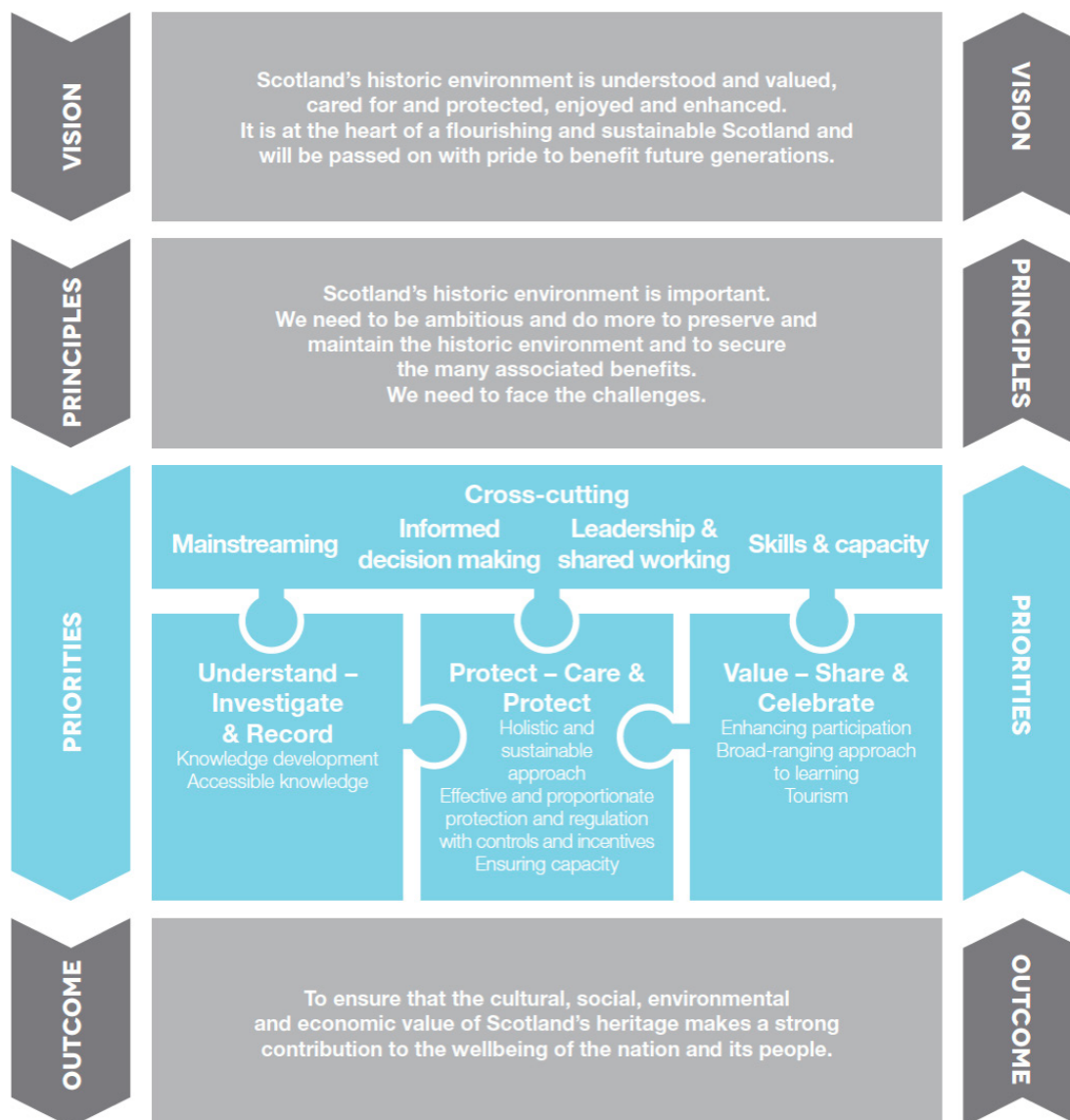
The Delivery Model

The Strategic Historic Environment Forum (SHEF), chaired by the Cabinet Secretary of Culture, Tourism and External Affairs, has responsibility for championing Scotland's historic environment by providing strategic advice and direction on its management and promotion. To support delivery on a number of OPiT strategic priorities a series of strategy working groups have been 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, Historic Environment Scotland (HES) leads and enables delivery of OPiT. HES has responsibility for coordinating and enabling the OPiT working groups and for reporting on progress to SHEF. HES also chairs the CEO's Forum which comprises Chief Executives or equivalents from key organisations involved in the delivery of OPiT. The CEO's Forum is responsible for ensuring momentum is maintained, identifying common threads and emerging themes, and addressing any issues in the delivery of the Strategy. Both SHEF and the CEOs Forum meet bi-annually. 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.

VISION

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.

PRINCIPLES

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

PRIORITIES

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.

OUTCOME

Progress with Priorities during 2019–20

The sector worked well together and accomplished a great deal in 2019–20, despite having to make huge adjustments to respond to the impact of COVID-19 from March 2020 onwards.

This year, the performance report is different to previous years. We want to celebrate and share successes in delivery of OPiT in 2019–20. However, we recognise that the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the sector and beyond, means that data and time to analyse it are not readily available.

This year the report does not include detailed data analysis. We have scored each KPI as Red, Amber or Green (RAG) using professional judgement from analysts and policy makers and feedback from the OPiT CEOs Forum. It has proved too difficult in the current climate to collect and analyse all the data we would usually use to update the RAG. At the time of writing, many employed in the sector have been furloughed, work programmes have been suspended or adjusted and key surveys and data reporting have been suspended.

This year we have focussed on the successes of the sector. Achievements over the course of the year span the whole range of OPiT objectives, including how the sector quickly transformed and how it worked to respond to the impact of COVID-19.

Next year, we will focus on the impact of COVID-19 and recovery strategies for the sector.

In the pages that follow, we highlight a sample of achievements across the sector. There are many more good practice examples available from the historic environment case study website. If you wish to submit a case study you can do this at anytime throughout the year, using the link above.

We evaluated progress towards delivery of OPiT and published an external evaluation 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 2020
Our Place in Time Dashboard

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

There are no measures that are not met at this stage (in 2020) as we are in year six of a ten year strategy.

- 9 of the 13 KPIs are Green (KPIs: 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12) in 2020, meaning that all these measures are currently on track to be delivered within the lifespan of the Strategy. These 9 KPIs were also Green in 2019.

- KPI 3 (historic environment evidence informs policy) was Amber in 2019 and remains Amber in 2020 meaning that progress has not been made as quickly as anticipated. The status of this indicator is connected to the Built Heritage Plan which is currently on hold. In addition, developing better cross cutting portfolio connections for the historic environment in Scottish Government will support our mainstreaming agenda and further deliver this indicator.

- KPI 4 (increase joined up working) was Amber in 2019 and remains Amber in 2020 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, the work was put on hold to provide an opportunity to reshape it. Work is now ongoing with partners on the continued development of a built heritage investment plan, focusing on reviewing opportunities and delivery models in light of Covid-19.

- KPI 11 (Participation - Volunteering) and was KPI 13 (Visitors) are Amber in 2020. They were Green in 2019. This change to Amber reflects the impact of COVID-19, which began to affect the growth and diversity of participation-volunteering and visitors immediately in March and is continuing to impact in the longer-term.

Mitigating Action

It is anticipated that shining a light on these areas that are currently at risk 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.

Key

Blue	**Achieved**
Green	**On Track**
Amber	**At Risk, Action Required.** Evidence that KPI may not be met. Progress may not be being made fast enough. Mitigating action may be required
Red	**Not met**
Grey	**Evidence Gap.** Not enough evidence to assess whether KPI is on track.

Key Performance Indicators: Results at 2020

	Priority	No	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	RAG 2017	RAG 2018	RAG 2019	RAG 2020
Cross Cutting	**Mainstreaming**	01	Increase economic and social wellbeing benefits from the historic environment for the people of Scotland	Green	Green	Green	Green
	Mainstreaming	02	Improve the environment by reducing CO_2 emissions	Green	Green	Green	Green
	Informed decision making	03	Increasingly historic environment evidence informs policy	Evidence Gap	Amber	Amber	Amber
	Leadership & shared working	04	Increase joined up working on strategic investment across public, private and voluntary sectors	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber
	Skills & capacity	05	Improve skills and capacity to deliver priorities	Amber	Green	Green	Green
Understand	**Knowledge development**	06	Increase customer focus of knowledge created on the historic environment	Green	Green	Green	Green
	Accessible knowledge	07	Improve access to knowledge on the historic environment	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
	Effective & proportionate protection and regulation	09	Increasingly the outcomes of management, including designation, reflects what people value	Evidence Gap	Green	Green	Green
	Ensuring capacity	10	Improve capacity by supporting communities through community empowerment and engagement	Evidence Gap	Green	Green	Green
Value	**Enhance participation**	11	Increase the number and range of people volunteering in the historic environment	Green	Green	Green	Amber
	Broad ranging approach to learning	12	Increase the number and range of people who learn about the historic environment	Green	Green	Green	Green
	Tourism	13	Increase the number and range of people visiting the historic environment	Green	Green	Green	Amber

Cross Cutting Strategic – Highlights

The sector has worked hard to ensure that the cultural, social, environmental and economic value of our heritage continues to make a major contribution to the nation's wellbeing, even during the unprecedented impact of COVID-19.

❖ **Responding to impact of COVID-19:** The sector transformed the way it worked to respond to the impact of COVID-19, quickly enabling working from home capability; video conferencing; a variety of creative approaches to sharing online content about heritage to keep people connected; and contributing more widely to the wellbeing of Scotland by, for example making masks for front line workers. HES undertook a survey in April 2020 to gather views from the heritage sector on the impact of Coronavirus on organisations. The responses to this will inform resumption and recovery planning for the sector. The full report of analysis is available from https://www.historicenvironment.scot/about-us/news/COVID-19-survey-shows-significant-impact-on-scotland-s-heritage-sector/. Key findings include:

   • Most common effects – Loss or postponement of work (78%), Loss of revenue (78%), Cancellation of planned income-generation events (71%)

   • On risk and mitigation – Approximately equal split: high risk/ re-shape to survive versus low risk/ resume to continue

   • Around 25 % of sector acknowledge they will need to reshape their operations

❖ **Wellbeing:** The sector improved its understanding of how heritage helps to improve wellbeing for individuals, communities and society. Research funded by HES, concludes that there are substantial positive impacts on health and wellbeing from engagement with the historic environment. Survey findings showed that 59% of people said they felt healthier and 29% of people said they felt less anxious because of their engagement with the historic environment. The sector is finding new and creative ways to support societal wellbeing during COVID-19. HES is donating food products stocked across its sites to local community food banks and homeless charities. Technology at the national conservation centre, the Engine Shed in Stirling, was repurposed to produce Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) visors for NHS staff battling COVID-19 across Scotland PPE for frontline-workers

❖ **Skills development:** The sector worked together with Skills Development Scotland and delivery partners from other sectors (e.g. education, construction, tourism, creative industries) to enhance investment in skills development, delivering year one of the Skills Investment Plan for Scotland's Historic Environment Sector and investing in workforce development roles. (HES -74 in 2019–20, up from 50 in 2017–18; NTS 7 in 2018–19 up from 3 in 2017–18).

❖ **Cross sector working on built heritage:** Good cross sector working enabled progress to be made on the development of material to inform a Built Heritage Management Plan. SHEF agreed that the plan would not be published in 2019–20, and in light of COVID-19 impact, focus will be redirected on reviewing opportunities and delivery models, guided by future need.

❖ **International recognition on climate change:** The cultural heritage sector's approach t**o assessing climate change** was internationally recognised when HES were invited by the British Council in Brazil to lead a workshop as part of an international response on fire risk management following a fire at Brazil's National Museum.

❖ **Climate Change Impact Guide Launched:** The sector was brought together to launch the *Guide to Climate Change Impacts* in October 2019. Created by partners from across the historic environment sector and beyond, the guide aims to raise awareness of the risks and hazards of climate change – such as increased rainfall, soaring temperatures, risking sea levels and shifting coasts – and their physical impact on the historic environment throughout Scotland. Arts culture, heritage and climate leaders gathered in Edinburgh to host the launch of a new **Climate Heritage Network**. The network provides a platform for the sector to unite to tackle climate change, one of the most significant and fastest-growing threats to global cultural heritage.

❖ The historic environment **generated £4.4bn for Scotland's economy** in 2019[1] (£4.2bn in 2018, £4.2bn in 2017 and £3.4bn in 2014). The economic impact of the historic environment grew 5% during 2019. This was driven by a 10% increase in tourism impact and 2% in construction impact. All three tourism sub-markets grew: international, domestic overnight and day visitors, though domestic overnight had the highest individual growth rate. The construction growth was driven by slightly increased private spending on non-residential buildings. There were no (or very low) impacts of COVID-19 in the 2019 calendar year impact figure: the earliest indications of reduced visitor impacts were in January 2020, while the construction industry continued at a similar pace until March 2020. The 2019–20 financial year will not be available until August 2020 ONS releases.

❖ **Evaluation of OPiT delivery:** We evaluated progress towards delivery of OPiT and published an external evaluation report in December 2019. https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationId=f7675826-2d31-4e39-a959-ab2701011940

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[1] The 2019 figure is correct at the time of writing. However, 2019 can still change with retrospective revisions by ONS, for example if construction bills for work delivered during the year are not settled.

Understand – Highlights

The sector demonstrated effective working together to ensure that Scotland's historic environment is better known and understood. Increased understanding of the historic environment was delivered in 2019–20 through investigation, research and recording activities, building Scotland's National Record of the Historic Environment, sharing knowledge and improving access to information and data. Due to COVID-19 many activities have been put on hold. However, the examples below illustrate just a few highlights and context for our understanding.

Research and Science – the sector has continued to enhance investment in research and science, working with partners to deliver more impactful outcomes. In June 2019, a new project was launched which brought together a range of partners from across the heritage sector. This project looks to harness space and satellite technology to protect Scotland's historic sites from climate change, specifically how satellite capabilities can assist in monitoring and managing its impacts. There are many examples of multi-partner research and information-sharing projects across the sector, for instance several major funded collaborative research projects, such as the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)-funded Scotland's Rock Art Project and Neolithic Crannogs in the Western Isles.

Digital Innovation – In May 2019 HES partnered with the Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities in the first History and Heritage Hackathon, bringing together graduate students, tech entrepreneurs, IT professionals and heritage professionals for an exciting weekend at Codebase in Stirling. The event opened up HES, and the data we hold, to a new audience. The creative ways in which the teams used information about the historic environment, and the quality of the outputs, was inspiring. Another project, Surgeons' Hall Museum receive £60k of funding to support the development of a gallery space that will explore the topic of robotics in surgery. This new space will be an immersive, interactive experience that will engage visitors in debate through innovative digital interpretation.

Scotland's Archaeology Strategy provides demonstrates effective partnership working to increase understanding of the historic environment. The 2019–20 actions in the delivery plan for Scotland's Archaeology Strategy have been completed.

Understanding of the historic environment is informed by more than 2m pieces of heritage information (up from 1.5m in 2014). This comprises around 336,000 National Record of the Historic Environment in Scotland (Canmore),1.5m National Collections Catalogue records held by HES and 300,000 local authority records HER/SMR. Around 1 in 5 (483K) of Scotland's dwellings are over 101 years old (built pre-1919). Online records have been available during COVID-19.

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

Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH): The sector improved its understanding of ICH during 2019–20. HES published an *Intangible Cultural Heritage Policy Statement* on 31 March 2020, working with museums and the wider creative sector on a Scotland-wide position. For the first time, we have a clear articulation of the definition of ICH, how it applied to heritage work. https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationId=c795452c-6e39-46f0-967b-ab8f00defd81

Care and Protect – Highlights

The sector continued to develop a holistic and sustainable approach to care and management; applied and developed effective and proportionate regulation; and worked to improve capacity by supporting communities through community empowerment and engagement. Below are some highlights of what was achieved in 2019–20.

❖ **There is evidence that the state of Scotland's pre-1919 stock is maintaining.** The latest available Scottish House Condition Survey data are 2018, available from SHCS, shows that **the rate of disrepair to critical elements for pre-1919 dwellings** has not changed significantly between 2017 (68%) & 2018 (73%) 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 **Buildings at Risk** Register https://buildingsatrisk.org.uk/ most recent summary data estimate that more than 800 historic buildings on the buildings at risk register (BARR) have been saved between 2009 and 2019. Between 2018–19, 83 buildings were saved and 229 are in the process of being restored.

❖ **Managing change** published new guidance on demolition of listed buildings, use and adaptation of listed buildings and asset management approach to land and property portfolios.

❖ The sector continues to play **an efficient role in the planning system.** In 2019–20, HES dealt with 95.91% of regulatory cases within timescales. The latest Planning Performance Report 2018-19.

❖ **Placemaking** – HES worked closely with Aberdeen City Council and Hoskins Architects on a high-profile city centre regeneration project with a key placemaking focus. Aberdeen's A-listed art gallery complex reopened in November 2019 after a £34.6 million major refurbishment by Aberdeen City Council, to improve accessibility, circulation, visitor facilities, and provide additional education rooms and exhibition space. Our expertise was provided during discussions and negotiation on the emerging design at pre-application stage and during the construction period. There are many more examples across the sector of placemaking.

❖ **Support for communities –** new website resources are available which provide communities with advice and guidance on asset ownership, funding and planning.

Value – Share and Celebrate – Highlights

Volunteering – The most recent national estimate shows there are around 17,100 volunteers in the historic environment in Scotland. The research to update of this estimate will not go ahead in 2020 and the extent to which volunteering has been impacted by COVID-19 will be explored in future analysis. NTS annual accounts 2018–19 show that they attracted around 2,700 volunteers, donating an estimated 159,954 hours. HES were awarded Investors in Volunteers accreditation on 28 January 2020 and 16 sites in HES care were engaging volunteers in 2019–20. HES had 999 volunteers in 2019–20 (up 40% on the previous year). Case studies provide examples of a wider range of volunteering opportunities available in 2019. Museum Galleries Scotland (MGS) are joint funding a project with the Scottish Government which will see volunteers undertaking accredited work-based learning.

Engaging young people – a new external **Youth Forum** for the sector was launched by HES in partnership with YoungScot to give a voice to young volunteers. It aims to engage young people aged 14–24 with no previous heritage experience through creative collaborations that build skills and confidence and support participants to positive future destinations for education, training and employment.

Scotland's Urban Past (SUP) – this £2.1m five-year programme came to an end in August 2019, enabling over 10,000 people to gain new skills and recognise places that they regarded as important. SUP was funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and HES, and was developed to support communities to investigate, record, engage with and celebrate the heritage of the nation's towns and cities.

Creative industries – In October, Knight at the Castle was recognised at the Creative Edinburgh Awards for enabling local young people, with no previous heritage experience, to build the confidence to create and perform their own inspired work. The project was led by Impact Arts (Projects) Ltd, co-designed by young people, and involved many other partners in Creative Industries and heritage sectors.

Visitors: For the most part of 2019–20 the number and range of visitors to heritage continued at health levels. The impact of COVID-19 will be explored in future reports. At the time of writing the most recent data shows that:

- NTS had 4.1 million visitors (Annual Accounts 2018–19). NTS estimate that around 0.6m were paying visitors in 2018–19 (up from 0.4m in 2015) and over 3.2m visitors were to unpaid sites in 2018–19 (up from 2.4m in 2014)
- HES visitors to paid sites up to 5.2m in 2019–20 from 3.4m in 2014

Membership numbers up during 2019–20. The impact of COVID-19 will be explored in future reports. At the time of writing the most recent data shows that:

- NTS members: 320,000 in 2014, up to 364,000 in 2017–18, up to 367,000 in 2018–19
- HES members: 140,000 in 2014 up to 204,000 in 2018–19, up to 206,455 in 2019–20

# Strategy Working Groups Progress

Built Heritage Investment Group

The activity and outputs of the Built Heritage Investment Group (BHIG) contribute directly to the achievement of OPiT KPI 4, *Increase joined up working on strategic investment across the public, private and voluntary sectors.*

The group produced a report on 'Investing In Our Built Heritage – Towards A Built Heritage Plan: Recommendations for Action', which was presented to SHEF in December 2019. The group also focused on the development of a prototype for a prioritisation tool – the 'Sustainable Investment Tool' (SIT) –, which is currently ready for sector testing.

Given the unprecedented implications of the COVID-19 pandemic the group agreed to pause the consultation on the Built Heritage Investment Plan and SIT in April 2020, whilst continuing to maintain progress in a number of areas to develop a plan for sustainable investment in built heritage.

Looking ahead, the group acknowledges the changed landscape within which all the OPiT groups are now operating. For the Built Heritage Investment group, it will be very important to align its activity with the 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.
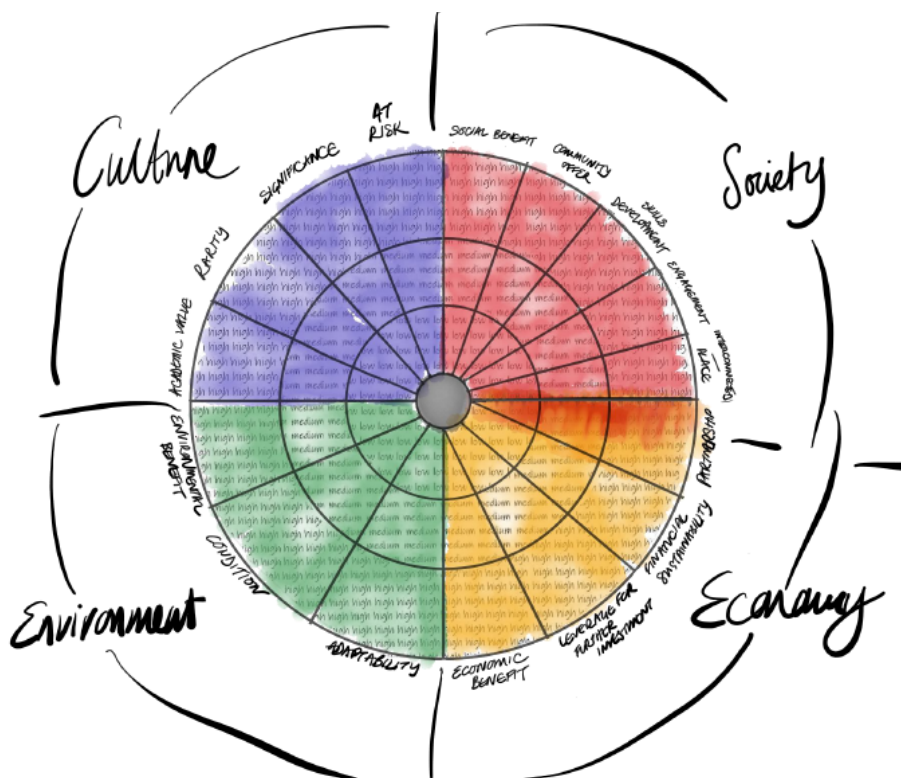
Climate Change Group

The group focused on the delivery of the 'Climate Change Impacts Guide', which was launched in October 2019, as well as on the development of a sector-wide 'Annual Report Card' for climate change, which is currently underway.

One of the challenges overcome by the group in this period was coordinating the input and contributions of multiple stakeholders, both internal and external, to deliver agreed outputs. One of the challenges ahead is understanding how the group can best contribute to the future and support the national recovery post COVID-19.

As for future priorities, the group recognises the urgency of a sector approach to the climate emergency and a consistent methodology for reporting, demonstrated against Scotland's National Performance targets and sustainable development goals.

The group 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 Skills and Expertise Group through the delivery of the Skills Investment Plan.

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 at all levels that are needed to nurture, manage and enjoy the historic environment across all our community.

In the 2019–20 financial year, the group met to discuss the implementation of the Skills Investment Plan. Terms of reference of the group were changed to reflect the changed purpose of the group from planning to delivery.

Progress in this financial year includes: the recruitment of the Skills Investment Plan Manager to oversee delivery; the development of an action plan for 2020–21; a proposal for delivery; and a progress report for 2019–20.

Other initiatives include:

- Archaeology Skills and Training Group established a Professional Development Award (PDA) in field work skills to address the skills gap of graduates leaving university without practical fieldwork skills

- The Scottish Traditional Building Forum purchased and prepared two trailers that will provide mobile classrooms for their CPD events and skills demonstrations delivered across Scotland

- Skills Development Scotland set up a project group of sector representatives to develop S2 careers resources for use in schools

- MGS gained SQA assessment centre status and recruited and trains two internal verifiers and six assessors from the museum sector to deliver SVQ3 Museums & Galleries Practice

COVID-19 presents a significant challenge for the Skills & Expertise group but also potential opportunities, for example in relation to a strengthened focus on digital skills and digital provision. The current plans are being revisited and it is envisaged that priorities will change, some actions will be delayed, and others may be dropped altogether.

Heritage Tourism Group

Before the COVID-19 crisis, the Heritage Tourism Group focused on other sector's priorities, such as themed years, National Tourism Strategy and sustainable tourism.

In terms of themed years, the group decided to continue the offer of the £1 entry to historic sites for young people in partnership with Young Scot, as a legacy of the Year of Young People. The group has been looking ahead at the 2020 as the Year of Coast and Waters, looking mainly at marketing and events, such as trails, exhibitions and commemorations, which – at the time of writing – are on hold due to the current temporary closure of all properties and sites across Scotland.

The group reviewed drafts of the National Tourism Strategy, Scotland Outlook 2030, which was published in March 2020, agreeing to use the strategy to drive collaboration, share knowledge, experience, issues, opportunities and best practice, and work towards shared outcomes of themed years.

For 2019–20, the focus of the group has been on sustainable tourism, setting up a sustainability subgroup and looking at the research on impacts led by Visit Scotland. In the years ahead, the aspiration is for the Scottish Tourism Industry to become a champion of climate change. The group has been exploring future scenarios and key drivers of change for heritage tourism in the next ten years to ensure long-term sustainability, responsibility and resilience for the sector.

Volunteering Working Group

The OPiT Volunteering Working Group focused on the development and the launch of the campaign 'Make your mark', as the OPiT Volunteering Participation Campaign 2019–2024. The aim of the campaign, linked to OPiT goals, was to increase participation and inclusion in Heritage Volunteering. Another goal was about sharing resources and collaboration between organisations.

The campaign was launched at the SCVO Gathering in Glasgow on 19th February 2020. The aspiration was for this campaign to be far-reaching, using other events such as Doors Open Days, Volunteering Awards, Scotland's first World Volunteering EXPO 2021 and year-long Festival of Volunteering to improve inclusion and diversity in heritage. A Communications Officer was appointed to support the campaign's operations. The post is hosted by the Scottish Civic Trust.

Another volunteering milestone, the Historic Environment Youth Forum was also launched in February 2020 to be run until 2021 in partnership between HES and Young Scot. 25 young people aged 12–25 started contributing their ideas to different areas of the historic environment, participating in policy, management and communications sessions.

Currently, whilst some activities can still be run remotely, most of the initiatives mentioned have come to a halt because of the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. A survey compiled by HES in April 2020 aimed to understand the impact of the crisis on the sector, including volunteers. The survey findings will be used to inform a safe resumption of activities and support volunteers in this process.

Looking Ahead

Since April 2020, the sector focused on responding to the crisis by re-prioritising agendas, pivoting businesses and planning for resumption of activities. Whilst many strands of work, such as tourism activities, engagement and live events, had to be temporarily halted due to the closure of offices and heritage venues, the sector was able to repurpose some of its services using digital platforms.

The results from the sector-wide heritage survey give an overview of the level of impact of the crisis across major heritage public bodies, charities and communities. As the results also highlight main concerns and opportunities, they will help inform collective priorities over the next period.

At the time of writing, partners in the heritage sector are currently working together through the OPiT working groups and through the recently established Covid Heritage Resilience Forum (CHERF) towards the recovery and renewal of Scotland post COVID-19 crisis. The main current focus is on resumption of activities and re-opening, as the sector comes out of lockdown.

Partners are also looking at possible future scenarios and how we can adapt to future critical uncertainties. This work will potentially require a collaborative review of the OPiT priorities in order to achieve recovery and ensure future resilience of the sector, as well as the need to articulate the contribution that the historic environment can make to the recovery agenda and to the future of Scotland.

We are committed to tackling inequalities. During the CHERF sessions, participants highlighted that a focus on equalities is missing from the OPiT groups. We will look for ways to address and highlight equalities and ensure our approach aligns to the commitments in *A Culture Strategy for Scotland.*

Further information

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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