



# GOOD, GREEN JOBS

THE REPAIR, MAINTENANCE AND RETROFIT OF EXISTING HERITAGE ASSETS DELIVERS GOOD, GREEN JOBS NATION-WIDE

## CASE STUDY:

Traditional Buildings Health Check

A not-for-profit membership-based maintenance scheme for owners of traditional buildings



Traditional Building Health Check inspection of a traditional residential

The Traditional Buildings Health Check helps owners take a more proactive and effective approach to maintaining and repairing their buildings while investing in traditional skills training and employment pathways in Scotland.

The objectives for the [Traditional Buildings Health Check Scheme](#) (TBHC) are to: promote regular maintenance of traditional buildings; promote good quality, appropriate repairs to traditional buildings; promote private investment in the traditional built heritage; and generate work for the construction industry and professional sector.

The TBHC was originally run as a pilot project from 2013-2018. It was initiated by Historic Environment Scotland (HES) in partnership with the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) Scotland. Stirling City Heritage Trust (SCHT) was responsible for the design, delivery, and management of the service in partnership with the funding bodies.

Over the course of the pilot £705,000 was invested in its delivery. In return £1.3 million was invested by members on repairs and £52,000 invested on skills

training. Nearly 300 members had joined generating £45,000 in membership fees for the scheme. Of the 144 buildings inspected, 88% required work within the next 12 months, while 63% required urgent/immediate repair or maintenance. Repairs were commissioned on 120 of the buildings surveyed. In many cases, the reports identified poor-quality or inappropriate repairs and long-term neglect of high-level masonry and chimneys which owners were often unaware of.

Overall feedback from members was positive and highlighted the sense of reassurance that the service provided. Members felt more empowered and motivated to act.

Based on the positive results of the pilot, SCHT is continuing to deliver this service in Stirling as part of the core activities of the Trust, funded by HES. This is currently the only such service being delivered in Britain.



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Maintenance is required for all buildings irrespective of type, ownership, construction method and age. Historic buildings are a finite resource and need particular skills and materials to keep them in good repair as inappropriate interventions can be damaging. It is acknowledged that there is a shortage of skilled operatives in the maintenance and repair sector. Investing in traditional skills training and employment pathways will enable economic and social resilience at a local level, as well as prevent money and carbon being wasted through poorly informed decisions that can lead to inappropriate repairs.

There is currently no national strategy to address widespread poor building maintenance or provide support to owners of traditional buildings in appropriate retrofit methods. Net zero targets will set a retrofit agenda on all existing buildings, of which traditional buildings represent 19%. Ensuring the building fabric is wind and watertight and in good sound condition is

the most effective energy saving measure you can do. This step also must be before any retrofit interventions take place. The TBHC has the potential to support this process by providing advice not only in suitable repairs, but also how to make traditional buildings more energy efficient.

The Stirling TBHC has acted as a ‘proof of concept’; it demonstrates the potential of a national service to effect widespread change. Through building inspection and an educational ethos, the TBHC aims to address the multiple and complex reasons for disrepair of our built heritage including a lack of property owner knowledge and confidence, and a shortage of appropriately skilled contractors. The service supports property owners to proactively repair and maintain their buildings. It aims to challenge the acceptance of low quality, poorly executed repairs which result in both building deterioration and erosion of our cultural heritage.

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Traditional Building Health  
Check inspection in Stirling  
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