

A stylized map of Scotland in a light teal color, set against a darker teal background. The map shows the main landmass and the surrounding islands, including the Hebrides and the Shetland Islands.

Our Past, Our Future

The Strategy for Scotland's
Historic Environment

Ar n-Àm a dh'Fhalbh, Ar n-Àm ri Teachd

Ro-innleachd airson Àrainneachd
Eachdraidheil na h-Alba



Foreword by Christina McKelvie MSP, Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development

I am delighted to present *Our Past, Our Future*, our refreshed five-year strategy for Scotland's historic environment. This strategy speaks to our shared heritage, and reflects the positive impacts the historic environment has for people and communities across the country and the beneficial role it will play in our future lives.

Scotland's historic environment is unique and diverse. It is internationally recognised through our iconic heritage attractions, often cited as one of the main reasons tourists visit Scotland. But, more than that, we can see the historic environment in the places we live, study, work, and play. It is present in our housing, our rural landscapes, and even in our transport infrastructure. It is unquestionably a central part of our lives, wherever in Scotland you may live – be it coastal, rural, or urban. It is therefore vital that we sustain and enhance the unique legacies of our past, which will continue to shape us and strengthen our sense of identity today and in the future.

The previous historic environment strategy from 2014, *Our Place in Time*, had many positive impacts across the heritage sector; the strategy was created collaboratively, and relationships lie at the heart of the many innovative projects it has delivered. Recognising




that the strategic context has changed considerably since *Our Place in Time* was first published, it is right that emerging and continuing challenges have prompted the need to re-evaluate the priorities for the sector.

The new strategy aligns with the key Scottish Government ambitions to build a wellbeing economy, create more resilient, inclusive and sustainable places, and deliver net zero in response to climate change. It articulates the inherent promise within the historic environment to contribute towards our national goals and targets, and the benefits that our heritage brings not only to Scotland's economy but to the health and wellbeing of all of Scotland's people. It will be through significant engagement with a wide and diverse range of voices across Scotland and beyond that we can turn the challenges we face into opportunities.

Much like its predecessor, this strategy is for everyone. I am confident that we can continue to champion our impressive historic environment through partnership working and cross-sector collaboration, and build on our existing achievements and relationships to ensure our heritage and the historic environment is sustained and enhanced in all its forms for generations to come.

Our mission is to sustain and enhance the benefits of Scotland’s historic environment, for people and communities now and into the future.

Our Priorities

-  Delivering the transition to net zero
-  Empowering resilient and inclusive communities and places
-  Building a wellbeing economy

Contents
Clàr-innse

Visualising the Strategy / A’ dealbhachadh an Ro-innleachd	6
About this Strategy / Mun Ro-innleachd	7
Where are we now / Càite bheil sinn an-dràsta	8
Scotland’s Historic Environment / Àrainneachd Eachdraidheil na h-Alba	10
Key Statistics / Prìomh Staitistearachd	12
Principles / Prionnsabalan	14
Our Mission / Ar Aithris-rùin	16
Our Priorities / Ar Prìomhachasan	17
Priority 1 – Delivering the transition to net zero / A’ comasachadh an eadar-ghlusaigh gu cothromachadh-carboin	18
Priority 2 – Empowering resilient and inclusive communities and places / A’ cumhachdachadh coimhearsnachdan is àitchean a tha daingneachd agus in-ghabhalach	22
Priority 3 – Building a wellbeing economy / A’ togail eaconomiadh maitheas	26
Measuring Success / A’ tomhais soirbheas	30
Delivery / Lìbhrigeadh	32
Strategic Drivers / Stiùridhean Ro-innleachdail	34

Visualising the Strategy

A' dealbhachadh an Ro-innleachd

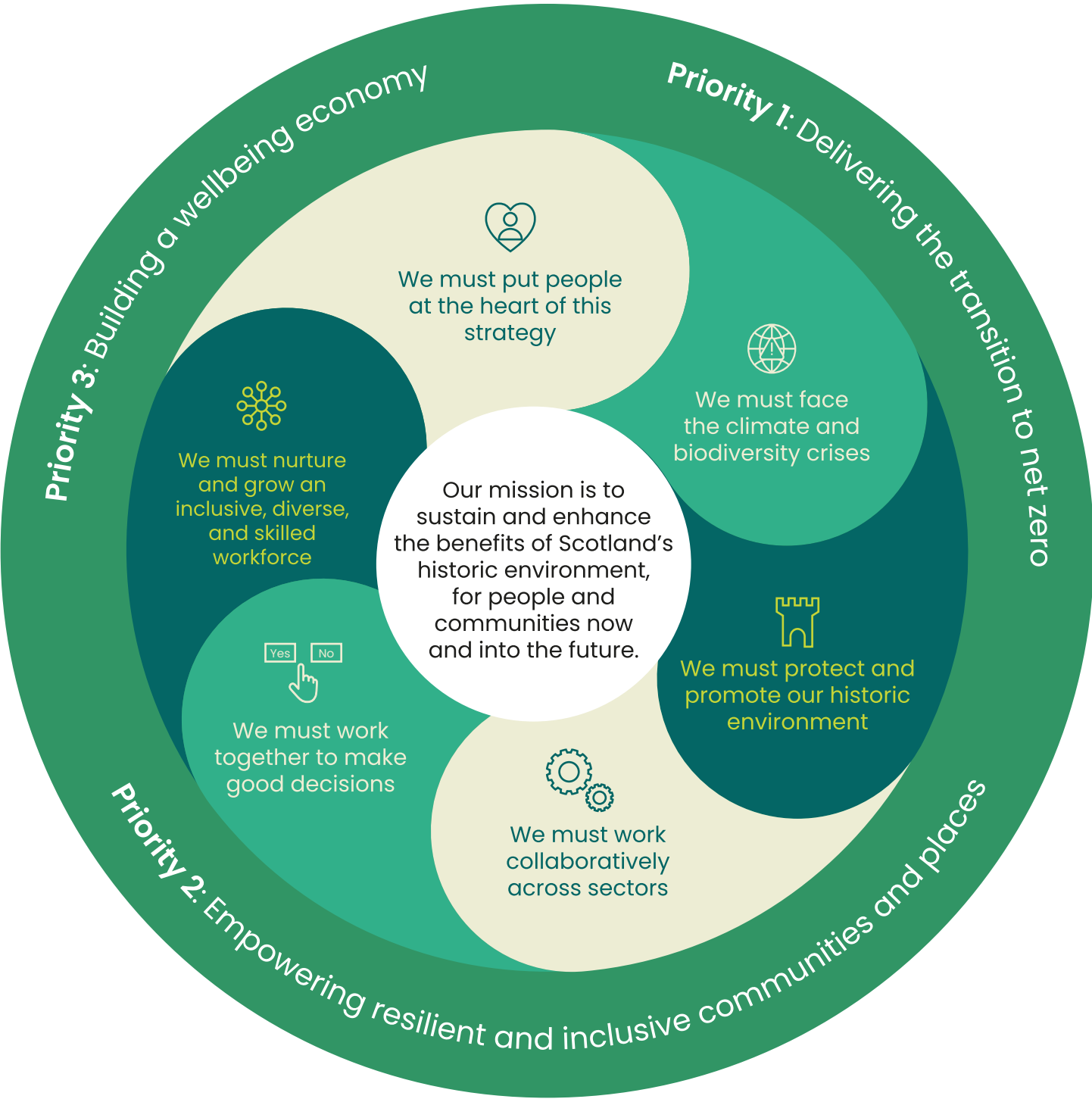


Diagram to show the strategy's mission, priorities, and outcomes

About this Strategy

Mun Ro-innleachd

The potential for the historic environment is limitless – there’s a joy in looking back, but the historic environment also looks forward.

Joe Traynor, Scottish Civic Trust

This document is Scotland’s national strategy for the historic environment. Our historic environment is a national asset: it creates jobs, enriches our communities, and helps to tell Scotland’s story to the world. It’s a vital resource in our transition to net zero and in helping local places to thrive. We want to sustain and enhance the benefits that our nation’s heritage creates and ensure the historic environment is at the centre of national life. So, through this document, we set out the priorities we want the historic environment to deliver against over the next five years.

The priorities contained in this strategy have been identified through consultation with the people of Scotland. These discussions helped to identify the areas where the historic environment can contribute the most benefit in the immediate future. But these priorities don’t encompass everything the historic environment is, and nor should they be seen as coming at the expense of the core activity that helps us to realise its benefits. Understanding, protecting, and valuing the historic environment will remain central to our ability to place it at the heart of a flourishing and sustainable Scotland.

This strategy comes at a time of considerable change and challenge. That’s why we must work together, across policy themes, industry sectors, and national boundaries to fulfil our mission.

This strategy is therefore a collaborative one, owned and delivered by everyone. All of us – the public sector, business, the charitable and third sectors, private owners, and communities across the country – have a role to play. So, when this strategy talks about the things that “we” can do, it refers to everyone in Scotland. The public sector – led by Historic Environment Scotland – will work to facilitate, enable, and drive delivery of key elements of the plan, and to co-ordinate monitoring and reporting on delivery.

The strategy sits alongside, and will work with, the Culture Strategy for Scotland, Scotland’s Museums and Galleries Strategy, and with other nationwide plans such as the National Strategy for Economic Transformation, the Infrastructure Investment Plan, the National Planning Framework, the Volunteering for All Action Plan, the National Gaelic Language Plan, Scotland’s Climate Change Plan and the Heat in Buildings Strategy to deliver the strongest outcomes for the people of Scotland.

Our past has shaped our country and our communities. It has made Scotland what it is today, and left us with a heritage that connects us to people and places across the globe. Through this strategy, and through collaboration up and down the country, we will use that legacy to build a fairer and more sustainable future for everyone.

Where are we now

Càite bheil sinn an-dràsta

Our Place in Time: The Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland (OPiT) was published in 2014. It was Scotland's first strategy for the historic environment, and brought people and organisations together from across the country to identify priorities for action. Since *OPiT* was developed, however, much has changed. We've seen significant early growth in the heritage tourism economy impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, while the declaration of a climate emergency requires us to move urgently towards net zero. Inflationary shocks and supply bottlenecks have also dramatically increased the costs of goods and services, putting severe pressure on households and businesses. The resilience of both organisations and people has been tested, with negative effects for the wellbeing of both individuals and communities. With policy priorities evolving in the face of these developments, it is right to consider our aims for Scotland's historic environment and the role it should play in national life.

Fortunately, we have evidence and activity to draw upon when taking stock. From evaluation of *OPiT*, we know that the strategy performed a useful role for many people and organisations. It provided a common language and common themes around which to align strategic planning, and led to notable successes such as publication of [a Guide to Climate Change Impacts](#), the [Skills Investment Plan](#) for Scotland's historic environment, and the launch of the [Make Your Mark](#) volunteering

campaign. It also helped to frame discussions around [prioritisation for our built and historic environment](#), and led to the creation of the [Historic Environment Policy for Scotland](#) and Scotland's first Archaeology Strategy.

Through performance reporting, and in particular [the wealth of case studies contributed by organisations across Scotland over the years](#), we have also compiled considerable evidence of the outcomes that Scotland's historic environment helps to realise. This data shows a range of national and local impacts, from adding significant sums to Scotland's GDP, to creating long-lasting benefits within communities. Sustaining these benefits is therefore just as important as adapting to meet new priorities.

This new strategic period starts in a hugely challenging place though, and Scotland's historic environment faces more pressures now than at almost any point in the recent past. Along with the scarring effect of the COVID-19 pandemic and rising fuel and materials costs, we face an acute shortage of key skills. The negative effects of the changing climate are already being felt, with extreme weather events impacting on buildings, infrastructure, and visitor attractions across the country. The world is currently not on course to meet the emissions reductions targets set by the Paris Agreement, and we not only have significant work to do to cut our emissions, we also need to adapt to meet the impacts of a hotter climate.



That link to the past is really important for how people feel a sense of belonging to their community; they care about it and therefore each other, and in that way the historic environment drives change in the future.

Douglas Westwater, Community Enterprise

We will not be able to protect every heritage asset though, and will need to make difficult choices about the historic places we invest in and which elements of our heritage we can maintain for the future. And we must face all of this within a difficult funding environment, and across a time frame in which businesses and community organisations will be focused on the immediate challenges of survival and recovery.

But in challenge is also opportunity. The historic environment is an asset for Scotland; for building a fairer, greener country. By focusing on issues of sustainability, resilience, wellbeing, and empowerment, we can channel our energies not only to support people and organisations through the immediate crisis but to shape a better future, and make a stronger and lasting contribution across economic, environmental, health, and other priority policy areas.

Scotland's Historic Environment

Àrainneachd Eachdraidheil na h-Alba

The historic environment is the physical evidence for past human activity. It connects people with place, and with the traditions, stories, and memories associated with places and landscapes.

The historic environment is part of our everyday lives. It provides character to our landscapes, strengthens and enhances our local communities, and helps to forge a sense of place.

The historic environment is a physical thing; whether that's a building, monument, site, or landscape; above or underground, or underwater. It can be culturally significant, and integral to our understanding of the past and the people whose lives came before ours; or perform a more functional role through providing a home, workplace, public park, farmland, or hospital. The historic environment can create spaces for recreation, leisure, tourism, and education, or places for nature to thrive. And while the historic environment is a physical thing, it's shaped by things we cannot touch or see: by stories, traditions, and concepts that help to give the physical traces of the past their meaning, significance, and value. At its heart, therefore, the historic environment is about people, and about our collective past, present, and future. It's about our connections

with each other and with our places and planet; about the legacies we inherit and those we leave behind. The historic environment *is* Scotland's story. And it is Scotland's future.

Scotland's historic environment isn't owned or cared for by any one person or organisation. Everyone has a stake in the historic environment, and everyone values it in different ways. For many people, the historic environment will be the home they own or rent, the neighbourhood they live in, or the castles and visitor attractions they visit in their spare time. For others, it will be the offices they work in or walk past, or the farmlands or landscapes they manage or pass through. Some people will value the historic environment as an economic asset, while for others it can be a source of identity, a resource for learning, or a spark for creativity. Some people will get as close as they can to it, by stepping into a trench, trowel in hand to excavate the past, or delving into archival records to find out more about their local area. Others will appreciate the historic environment

simply as a backdrop while walking their dog or taking their children to school. This strategy acknowledges the great breadth that the historic environment encompasses, and the fact that everyone in Scotland has a stake in how it's managed and shared with the world. And while this strategy is about prioritising certain outcomes and working to maximise these, this does not mean that this is the only way that the historic environment does, or can, benefit our country and our communities.

While the historic environment is the main area of focus in this strategy, it's just one part of Scotland's heritage. The historic environment sits alongside the material culture left to us as museum, gallery, and archive collections; the intangible heritage of stories, traditions, rituals, crafts, customs, music, and poetry; and our natural heritage: the diversity of life we share our planet with, shaped by millennia of interaction with human societies and billions of years of evolution. Some of Scotland's most prominent buildings and monuments

are given meaning through rituals, customs, or performance. Archives tell us the story of historic buildings; museum collections the story of how people lived in a particular place. Our country's landscapes, woodlands, and marine environments have been shaped by centuries of human occupation, management, and design, while Gaelic, Scots, and British Sign Language – as well as the languages spoken by Scotland's migrant communities – are essential to understanding and passing on our shared heritage. This strategy embraces and celebrates the many types of heritage that bring colour and diversity to modern Scotland, and recognises that the historic environment is shaped and enriched by each element.



Key Statistics

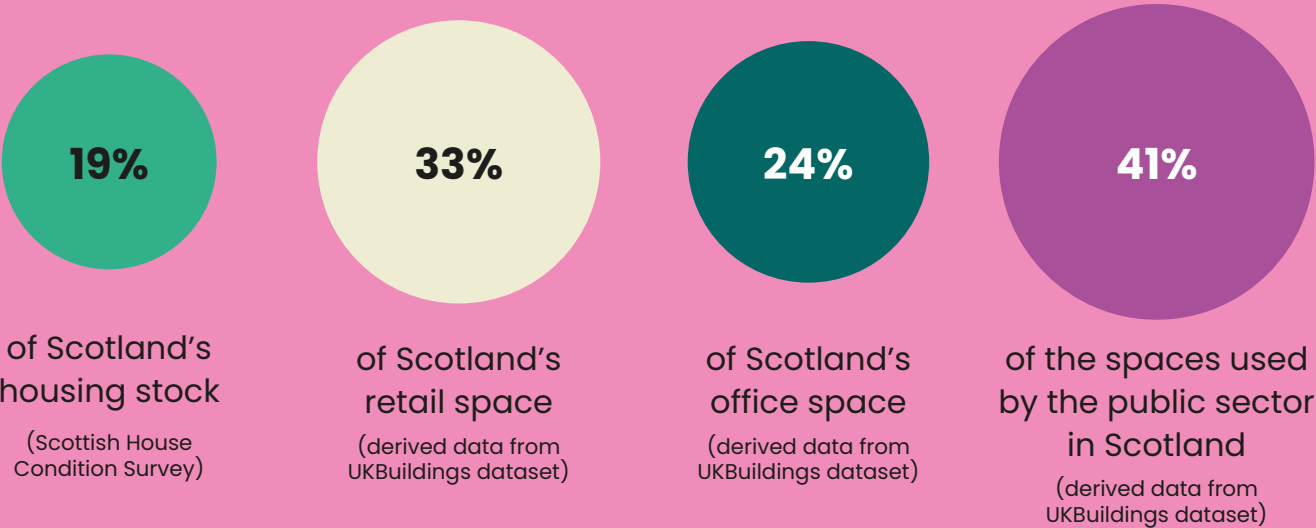
Prìomh Staitistearachd

While **93%** of Scottish people say it is important that Scotland’s heritage is well looked after, only **76%** think that the heritage of their local area is well cared for.

(Scottish Household Survey, 2021)



Traditional buildings are estimated to make up:



As of March 2023, Scotland’s historic environment is supported by more than **58,000** designations, covering both cultural and natural heritage:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 6 World Heritage properties | 8 historic marine protected areas |
| 8,300 scheduled monuments | 40 national scenic areas |
| 47,500 listed buildings | 1,400 sites of special scientific interest |
| 672 conservation areas | 43 national nature reserves |
| 388 gardens and designed landscapes | 2 national parks |
| 40 historic battlefields | 2 biosphere reserves |

However, **95%** of Scotland’s historic environment is undesignated.

(ALGAO: Scotland)

Only **15%** of investment in Scotland’s historic environment comes from the heritage sector; **60%** is spent by homeowners or the private sector, and **25%** by the public and third sectors.

(Built Heritage Investment Group)

Around £1.2bn is spent each year on repairing and maintaining Scotland’s historic building stock. But it will cost an estimated **£6.6bn** to convert Scotland’s historic residential buildings to low-carbon heating.

(SHEA and HES calculations)

At 53%, Scotland has the highest proportion of pre-1946 housing stock in Europe, compared to 38% for the UK and 22% across the EU.

(BRE Trust, 2020)

Over 18 million people visited heritage attractions in 2019, with half of all international visitors reporting heritage as the key motivation for visiting Scotland.

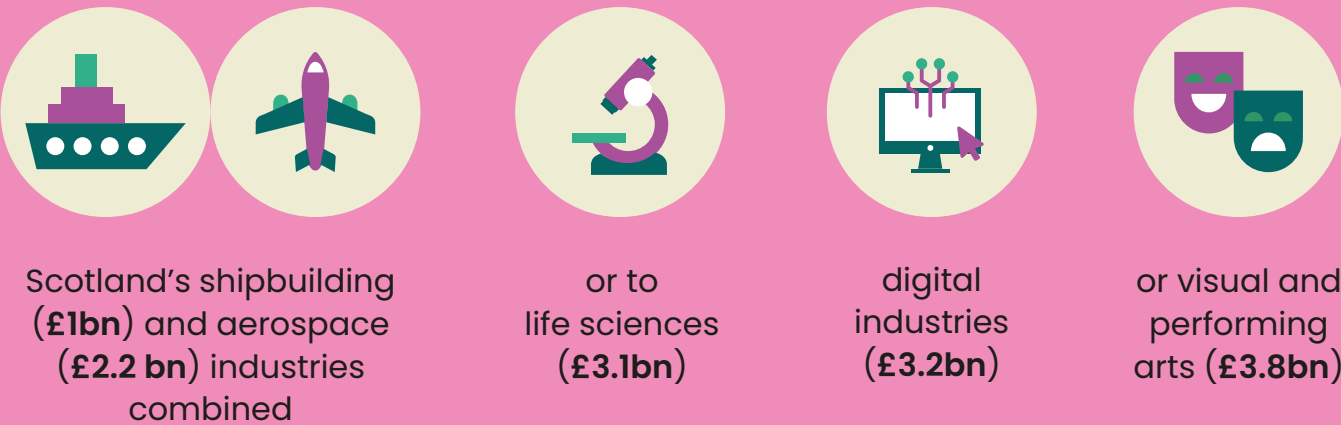
(SHEA and VisitScotland)



Visitors who included a heritage attraction as part of their trip **spent over £3.2 billion in 2019**.

(SHEA, comparators from Scottish Annual Business Statistics, 2019)

This contribution is comparable to the turnover of



Principles

Prionnsabalan

In working towards our mission, we will be guided by the following overarching principles:



We must put people at the heart of this strategy

The historic environment creates real benefits for people. This strategy is about channelling effort to deliver the best outcomes from the historic environment for people across Scotland. This means putting people at the heart of decision-making, and not just listening but empowering people to make decisions about the things that affect them. It means working with employees, with volunteers, with homeowners, and with local communities to understand how to do things better. And it means actively supporting under-represented or marginalised groups to identify and overcome the barriers to their involvement, and recognising and working to eliminate any discrimination or prejudice in our work.



We must act on the climate and biodiversity crises

We are in a climate emergency and need to rapidly decarbonise our economy. At the same time, we need to reverse the catastrophic loss of plants and animals that has been ongoing in Scotland as elsewhere across the globe, and need to re-establish our connection with nature. The historic environment has a vital role to play in supporting good, green jobs and promoting low-carbon materials and skills. But time is not on our side: we need to act now, and we need to act fast, and these concerns should permeate everything we do.



We must protect and promote our historic environment

Our heritage – whether tangible or intangible, cultural or natural – enhances our quality of life and is a hugely valuable economic, social, environmental, and cultural resource. We owe it to future generations to leave them assets that they can value, enjoy, and benefit from just as we do today. Achieving this requires our historic environment to be in good shape, and to be used responsibly and sustainably. Understanding the historic environment – and the things that make it special – is fundamental to this, as too is being able to prioritise which assets we will invest in maintaining.



We must work collaboratively across sectors

Our mission is ambitious, and so are our actions. But that mission, and those actions, requires everyone to play their part. They require support from, and engagement with, sectors or industries beyond heritage, and require us to develop truly creative, open, and collaborative partnerships. To deliver our outcomes we will forge new connections and new relationships to derive maximum benefit for the people of Scotland, and champion the role the historic environment plays in meeting national goals and priorities.



We must work together to make good decisions

Everyone has a stake in the historic environment. Good decision-making considers all aspects of the historic environment and the different ways it is valued by people. Good decisions are also transparent and recognise that a wide range of factors can affect the historic environment in different ways. Limited resources mean we can't do everything. We must be prepared to make difficult decisions and to prioritise our actions to realise the strongest possible outcomes.



We must nurture and grow an inclusive, diverse, and skilled workforce

Scotland's historic environment is supported by a range of people, and this strategy must support all those who work with the historic environment, whether they do so as paid professionals or volunteers. Our workforce should reflect Scottish society, and should be open to varied perspectives and fresh ideas. Our workforce also needs to have the skills necessary to be fit for the future, with those skills valued and promoted, and pathways to gaining them open to all. Supporting the people who investigate, care for, and promote the historic environment, and ensuring that our workplaces are as inclusive and fair as possible, is essential to fulfilling our mission.



Our Mission

Ar Aithris-rùin

Our mission is to sustain and enhance the benefits of Scotland's historic environment, for people and communities now and into the future.

This strategy adopts a mission-oriented approach, because solving the challenges – and making the most of the opportunities – facing Scotland requires multiple strands of activity, across multiple partners and multiple sectors. Setting a mission sets a direction of travel and helps to identify the actions needed to make effective progress on that journey.

Our Priorities

Ar Prìomhachasan

This strategy targets activity to where the historic environment can deliver most benefit for the people of Scotland over the next five years. Through consultation and engagement, three priority areas for action have been identified. These are big, national-level challenge areas that are priorities for individuals, communities, and businesses across the country just as much as they are for the Scottish Government. By giving particular focus to these areas in their activities, anyone working with the historic environment – whether directly or indirectly – can ensure they are delivering against some of the nation's highest priorities. While the historic environment will not by itself solve all the problems under these themes, we know it can play a strong role in delivering against all three areas.

To help further target resources, align activity, and define success, the strategy identifies several outcomes under each priority heading that we can work together towards. It also identifies some high-level actions that can help to realise these outcomes. These are not the only actions we will take to deliver the strategy, and we will need to be agile and adaptable to meet changing circumstances. We will also need action at multiple levels: from homeowners and landowners, through local and regionally based organisations, to national institutions and public bodies. Collaboration is therefore key to achieving success, as is working across sectors or regional borders. Working together to achieve our outcomes will bring us closer to realising our mission, while making a real difference to people's lives in the process.

Our priorities are:



Delivering the transition to net zero



Empowering resilient and inclusive communities and places



Building a wellbeing economy



Priority 1 – Delivering the transition to net zero

Prìomhachas 1 – A’ comasachadh an eadar-ghlusaigh gu cothromachadh-carboin

UK-wide, it is predicted that equipping the construction sector with the skills needed to retrofit historic buildings across the UK would lead to an extra **£35bn generated annually, supporting 290,000 jobs.**

(Grosvenor, for Historic England)

10,000 new jobs will be needed over the next decade to maintain and adapt Scotland’s traditional building stock.

(HES analysis of Skills Development Scotland industry forecast data)

Over the last 30 years, **average temperature in Scotland has risen by 0.5°C, Scottish winters have become 5% wetter**, and **sea level around the Scottish coast has increased by up to 3cm** each decade.

Scotland’s 2030 targets for heat in buildings:

68% – reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from buildings

22% – of heat to be supplied directly from renewable sources.

The difference we want to make:



Outcome 1:

Reduced emissions from the historic environment



Outcome 2:

The historic environment is more climate resilient



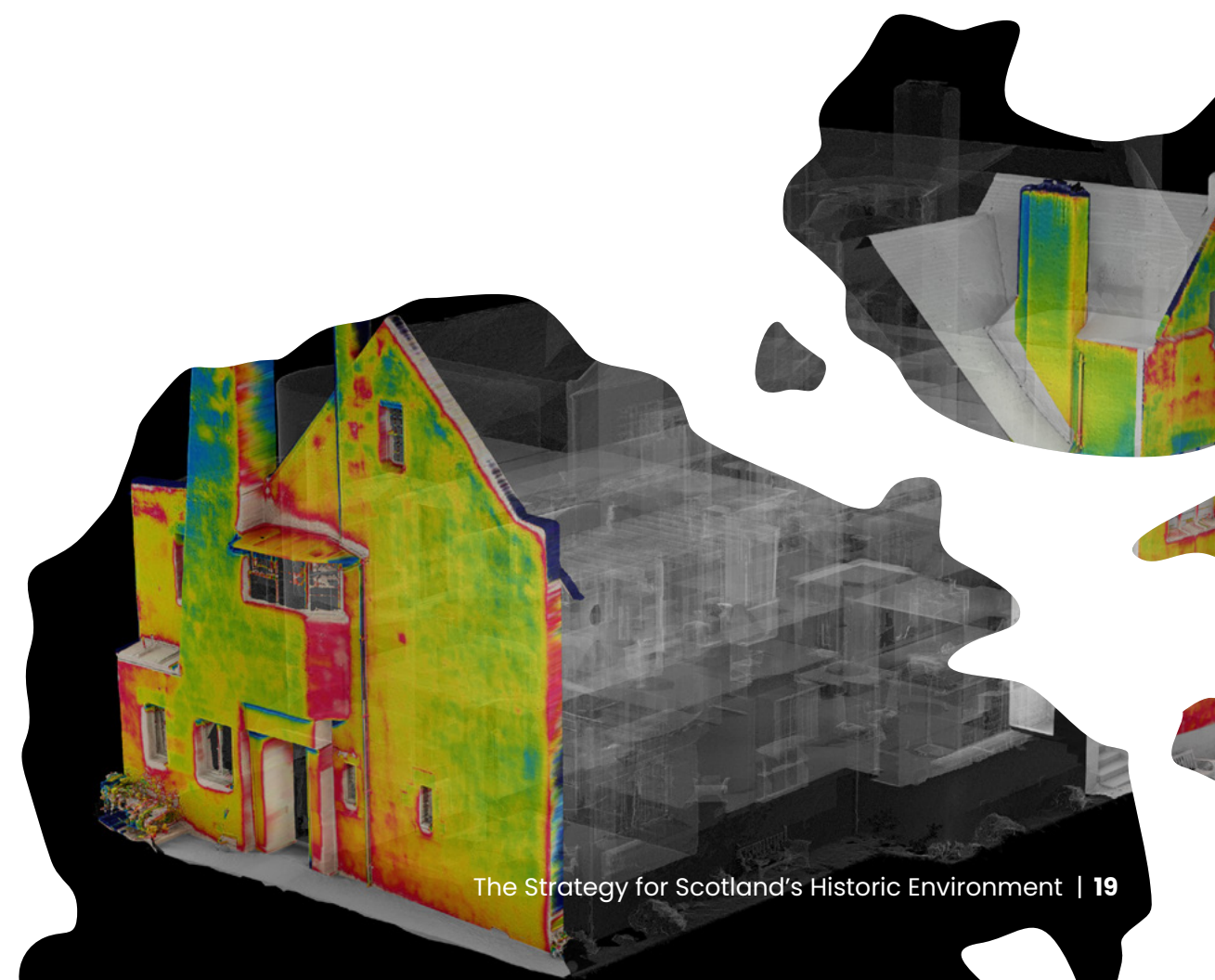
Outcome 3:

Improved pathways for historic environment skills

The historic environment is owned, occupied, used, and loved by millions. It’s a vital part of our national infrastructure and a key asset in our efforts to tackle climate change. Maximising the useful life of our buildings prevents waste and reduces carbon emissions, while good landscape management helps to promote biodiversity and absorb carbon through nurturing plants and soil.

Caring for the historic environment doesn’t mean preventing change though. Some change will be essential if our historic infrastructure is to be prepared to face a changing world and a changing climate. We need our historic environment to be resilient in the face of these threats, and resilience covers more than just the protection

we provide to our physical heritage. It means having the right skills and materials to work with the historic environment, in the right places, and at the right cost. It means reducing the emissions from the way we work, and from people visiting historic sites or properties. And it means having the right knowledge to work with our heritage, so that benefits are realised sustainably, and so that everyone can make informed decisions about the future of the assets they care for. By delivering against our net-zero commitments, we will not just help to ensure the long-term future of Scotland’s historic environment but create jobs across the country, preserve the character of local places, create warmer homes and offices that are cheaper to heat, and support landscapes that let people and nature thrive together.



How we'll do this:

Actions to deliver against this priority include:

- Establish a carbon emissions baseline for Scotland's historic building stock
- Develop a historic environment route map for net zero, supported by relevant policies and guidance
- Advocate for a review of VAT on repair and maintenance
- Promote a fabric-first approach to energy-efficiency measures in historic buildings
- Provide advice, support, and guidance to people who are looking to reduce the emissions of historic buildings, or who are looking to prepare and respond to the changing climate
- Work to reduce emissions from heritage tourism visits
- Ensure heritage grant programmes can fund adaptation measures
- Work towards a better understanding of how the historic environment can contribute to biodiversity restoration and gain
- Revise and expand the Skills Investment Plan for Scotland's historic environment to identify the opportunities and actions needed to create a sustainable skills ecosystem, and to improve the delivery of heritage skills training
- Improve and enhance the research and development infrastructure for heritage in Scotland by creating new national centres for skills and innovation.

Case study: Grassroots Building: Building positive climate action from turf



The project has given local communities and traditional builders the training to use this living material for their own building projects in a modern world affected by the climate crisis. Built using concepts borrowed from pre-history, with materials borrowed from the soil, this project nevertheless has eyes set on our net-zero future.

Dr Tanja Romankiewicz,
University of Edinburgh

An ancient way to a better future

A team of researchers, building professionals, and community members have combined to deepen our understanding of how turf-building that was once ubiquitous in the past can be part of our net-zero future. The project, funded by HES and a UK Economic and Social Research Council Impact Accelerator Grant, trialled building modern turf structures, whilst offering training in ancient crafts. Crucially, it assessed the sustainability of using turf today, investigating how prehistoric circular economies relying on turf regeneration could be translated into the present.

The project provided valuable insights beyond turf-building; on reseeded strategies to maximise biodiversity and accounting of carbon balances including natural and social gains. Designed and built by Daniel Postma of Archaeo Build, these structures and the wider project scope developed from research by Tanja Romankiewicz (University of Edinburgh).

The turf-building site is at Comrie Croft, an eco-farm in Perthshire, which aims to be a model for rural regeneration, combining conservation, low impact housing, sustainable enterprises, recreation, and eco-tourism.



Priority 2 – Empowering resilient and inclusive communities and places

Prìomhachas 2 – A' cumhachdachadh coimhearsnachdan is àitchean a tha daingneachd agus in-ghabhalach

Around one third of all community asset transfers since 2015 have involved a heritage asset.

(HES analysis of Scottish Land Fund data)

The historic environment is supported by the work of **17,100 volunteers**.

(Volunteer Scotland)

The Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme has **awarded £48m to 69 schemes across Scottish local authorities since 2007**, repairing **1,206** historic buildings and leveraging **£120m** of additional investment.

(HES)

The difference we want to make:



Outcome 4:

Organisations that care for the historic environment have the right skills and are more resilient



Outcome 5:

Communities have more opportunities to participate in decision-making about the historic environment



Outcome 6:

The historic environment is more diverse and inclusive

Scotland's historic environment brings colour and variety to our landscapes, and shapes the character and identity of our places. It is cared for and supported by the work of thousands of organisations and individuals. Some people get involved in heritage to take care of specific buildings or monuments, some to celebrate or learn more about their local areas, others to keep alive customs, crafts, or languages.

This activity sustains jobs and businesses across the country, helps to build thriving local communities and encourages regeneration and placemaking. Our historic environment would be much the poorer without these efforts. But many heritage organisations are now faced with financial, labour, and skills shortages that threaten their ability to keep delivering these benefits, or that require changes to be made to their operating and business models. Private owners face the same challenges in maintaining their assets

and their estates. Individuals have also suffered over the last few years, with children and young people in particular losing opportunities for learning and enjoyment because of the pandemic. Many people have also stopped volunteering for health, caring, or financial reasons. Some Gaelic-speaking communities face the prospect of losing their language and the links it provides them with the past, while other communities are excluded from heritage altogether. We therefore need to find new and innovative ways to do things, to improve access and ensure a long-term, sustainable future for everyone who cares for Scotland's historic environment.



How we'll do this:

Actions to deliver against this priority include:

- Work to improve knowledge of the organisations that make up the historic environment and their support needs
- Scale up existing programmes to promote business skills, strategic and succession planning, and digital literacy across Scotland's heritage sector
- Build on, and develop further, regional, national, and international knowledge-sharing networks to foster collaboration and support innovation
- Create more opportunities for people to understand and celebrate the diverse languages and cultures that tell Scotland's story
- Build on the Make Your Mark volunteering participation campaign to grow the number, diversity, and skillset of heritage volunteers
- Provide advice, guidance, and inspiration to enable communities to acquire and manage heritage assets
- Ensure a diversity of voices can participate in decisions about the historic environment, through targeted community engagement and capacity building
- Work to promote shared understanding of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) across public bodies and to align support for communities working with ICH
- Promote the involvement of children and young people across our work with the historic environment
- Work with education authorities and providers to embed heritage across the Scottish curriculum.

Case study:
Montrose Playhouse, Montrose



This is the place that everyone from round here learned to swim, so people already had a really strong connection with it and wanted a positive outcome for the building. It has been a huge effort to adapt it with and for the community. We are delighted to have this space that can provide so much.

Matt Buchanan, Montrose Playhouse

From social-media dream to reality:
the power of community

The Montrose Playhouse project can be traced back to 2013, when a Montrose-born architectural designer uploaded speculative plans for a new cinema to social media.

The site he had chosen was the derelict local swimming pool that had been empty since a more modern facility had been built nearby. The social media post immediately garnered widespread local attention and became the spark for community discussions about reuse and regeneration of the site, attracting press coverage as the story grew. A committee was formed and began consultation on the site's future.

The Playhouse committee worked for nine years to fund and realise the dream of a cinema and wider cultural and arts hub in their town. Across that time the local community delivered their own funding initiatives, also pitching in to strip out the old building with the help of local businesses.

The Montrose Playhouse is now open as an adaptable three-screen cinema, with education and exhibition spaces, retail space and a café bar. This is a community-focused project run by local volunteers under the charity Montrose Playhouse Project SCIO.



Priority 3 – Building a wellbeing economy

Prìomhachas 3 – A' togail eaconomiadh maitheas

21 full-time equivalent jobs are supported for every **£1m** spent on the repair, maintenance, and improvement of Scotland's existing buildings – **40% higher than for new builds**.

(Fraser of Allander Institute)

The historic environment generates over **£4.4 bn a year for Scotland's economy**, with **£2.5bn** generated by the repair and maintenance and **£1.9bn** by heritage tourism.

(SHEA)

The historic environment sustains **68,000 full-time equivalent jobs**.

(SHEA)

86% of people report a wellbeing benefit from engaging with heritage.

(HES)

The difference we want to make:



Outcome 7:

The historic environment makes a responsible contribution to Scotland's economy



Outcome 8:

The historic environment provides fair work



Outcome 9:

Increased engagement with the historic environment, with a focus on activities that enhance wellbeing

The historic environment creates significant economic benefits for Scotland. It creates good, green jobs across the country, and is a major reason that millions of visitors come to Scotland each year. It inspires blockbuster movies, video games, and internationally recognised food and drink products, and creates myriad opportunities for learning, socialising, and exercise. This activity supports thousands of businesses, as well as activities that have proven wellbeing benefits for participants. The historic

environment can therefore be a key asset in helping us to build a wellbeing economy, and an economic system that operates within environmental limits, and that enables both current and future generations to live well. Realising this goal means building on the things we already do well as a country, while making sure the benefits reach a greater diversity of people, and that we do things in a sustainable manner. By doing this, we'll ensure the jobs we create are fair and meaningful ones, that work for people and places.



Community wealth building through historic assets:

The transfer of Comhairle assets to community organisations has had a significant regenerative impact. It provides an excellent example of collaboration and partnership between the Comhairle and the community. It has helped communities take greater ownership of their own development, stimulated new job creation and helped population retention in some of our more peripheral communities.

Malcolm Burr,
Chief Executive, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar



How we'll do this:

Actions to deliver against this priority include:

- Work with regional economic partnerships to embed the historic environment in job creation, local regeneration, enterprise, and community wealth building
- Work to promote the historic environment's benefits and interests through engagement with national forums, consultations, and discussions
- Work to ensure that procurement supports the use of local employment, sustainable supply chains, and the use of traditional materials
- Develop and share approaches to responsible tourism, ensuring tourism contributes to the economy without being detrimental to communities and the environment
- Work with the UK and Scottish governments to ensure that investment in the historic environment through major infrastructure investment funding is targeted to benefit both communities and the historic environment
- Drive the adoption of fair work and the living wage across historic environment businesses, through campaigning and reviewing grant-funding conditions
- Work with partners to develop and deliver employability programmes, based on fair work practice
- Develop partnerships and activity programmes to utilise the historic environment to support health and wellbeing
- Work to recognise and overcome barriers to engagement, so that everyone – regardless of background – can benefit from Scotland's historic environment.



Case study:
The Ridge, Dunbar



We are harnessing the massive untapped potential of the most marginalised individuals in our community, to transform vacant and derelict sites back into productive use, creating jobs, boosting the local economy and aiding regeneration, making Dunbar a better place to live and work.

Kate Darrah, The Ridge

Changing lives through the historic environment

The Ridge was set up in 2012 and has grown organically since then, inspiring transformational change. The organisation aims to create jobs and training opportunities in around Dunbar, using the historic environment as the springboard to enrich lives and improve wellbeing. The organisation believes in the value of local heritage, in terms of both the natural and built environment, and wants to make sure that current and future generations are able to appreciate and care for it.

Their aim is to:

- provide training and support to help people find gainful employment locally, often through the maintenance of historic buildings
- develop a range of practical supports to allow more vulnerable members of the community to overcome barriers, allowing people the chance to fulfil of their potential
- promote and make available the personal health and well-being benefits of the historic environment to our local economy by improving Dunbar town centre as a tourist attraction, as well as an attractive place for local people to live, work and shop.

Measuring Success

A' tomhais Soirbheas

In the table below, we set out some of the sources we'll use to understand if we've been successful in achieving this strategy's outcomes. It won't always be possible to use one single source of evidence to chart success, so we'll adopt a mixed approach in monitoring delivery against our outcomes, with evidence drawn from both numeric data and narrative case studies. Where we might lack suitable sources of evidence, we will work to identify new ways to capture the necessary information. We will adopt a Red-Amber-Green (RAG) approach to monitoring performance, based on analysis of the range of data sources available.

Reporting against this strategy will incorporate data compiled for Scotland's Historic Environment Audit (SHEA): SHEA reports on the facts and figures that make up Scotland's historic environment, including its assets and people, and aims to identify the health of the historic environment and the impact of the resources used to manage and protect it. SHEA will continue to provide a useful resource for everyone working with the historic environment, and a way to celebrate the many benefits that it brings to people and communities across Scotland.

Priority	Outcomes	Sources of evidence
Delivering a net zero transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced emissions from the historic environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carbon emissions associated with the historic environment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The historic environment is more climate resilient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent measurement and reporting on emissions reductions across the historic environment Planning approvals for appropriate adaptation and retrofit measures Data from the Scottish House Condition Survey
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved pathways for historic environment skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion of the historic environment in Local Authority and public sector climate adaptation planning Reports from the historic environment sector Skills Investment Plan delivery groups

Priority	Outcomes	Sources of evidence
Empowering resilient and inclusive communities and places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisations that care for the historic environment have the right skills and are more resilient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-reported resilience of historic environment organisations Reporting from national skills and capacity building training programmes Historic environment assets in community ownership and use
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities have more opportunities to input into decisions about their historic environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The historic environment as a focus for community development trusts Tools available for communities to use in influencing decisions about the historic environment Diversity of employees, trainees, apprentices, or volunteers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The historic environment is more diverse and inclusive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversity of people in Scotland engaging with the historic environment Partnerships and initiatives with organisations representing young people and children
Building a wellbeing economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The historic environment makes a responsible contribution to Scotland's economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expenditure in construction and tourism Jobs supported by the historic environment People engaging with heritage - volunteering and learning Gender pay gap across the historic environment sector
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The historic environment provides fair work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Living Wage accredited historic environment organisations Partnerships and initiatives with organisations focused on wellbeing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved wellbeing through engagement with the historic environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People enjoying the historic environment

Delivery will be key to enabling action and to achieving the priorities of this strategy. We need action across Scotland, from a range of different organisations, individuals, and stakeholders.

Working together, we will translate the principles and priorities of this strategy into meaningful action. We will need an inclusive and transparent approach, and one that engages stakeholders from a variety of backgrounds and sectors.

Some of these stakeholders will have heritage as their core purpose, while others might have no idea that they are custodians of Scotland's historic environment. What works for an urban community will not be the same as what works for an island community, and what works for a large organisation operating nationwide will not be the same as what works for a small, locally based community group. We therefore need the flexibility to adapt delivery to suit such a diversity of needs, while offering a common framework to support and enable effective delivery.

The Scottish Government has a vital role to play in enabling the delivery of the strategy, and we will need collaboration within and between government departments and agencies if we are to realise our mission, just as we need

cross-sector working and knowledge sharing. Historic Environment Scotland, as the public body for Scotland's historic environment, will have a leading role to play in delivering the strategy, and in helping to facilitate such a joined-up approach. Local authorities will also be key delivery partners, especially through their decision-making responsibilities

To support oversight and delivery of the strategy at the national level, a series of forums and working groups will be established. Scotland's Historic Environment Forum (SHEF) will run as an annual event where leaders and policy-makers from the historic environment and other relevant sectors can come together to collectively take stock and discuss emerging and future issues. A strategy steering group, comprising key stakeholders and leaders drawn from across Scotland, will be responsible for oversight and reporting on the strategy's delivery.

Some of the working groups established to support delivery of the previous strategy are anticipated to continue (for example, those focused on



skills and on volunteering), as will Scotland's Strategic Archaeology Committee. These will be bolstered and complemented by new groups to cover the thematic range of the new priorities. Many initiatives already exist across Scotland to support heritage, and we will work with Scotland's development agencies, local authorities, public-sector bodies, and funders to offer mechanisms and resources that enable and empower delivery, co-operation, and knowledge sharing at local and regional levels. We recognise that one size will not fit all though, and that any

resulting mechanisms will need to be adapted to suit local circumstances and be capable of evolving to meet changing circumstances.

This strategy will also be supported by a website, which will act as a central information point. The website will provide an overview of the delivery model as it evolves, along with updates and information from the working groups and any other relevant initiatives. It will also host case studies and statistics relating to the strategy and its implementation.



Working together for success:

South of Scotland Enterprise work across many areas of the historic environment, recognising the contribution it has to make to the success of the region. We look forward to supporting the strategy and fostering collaboration with regional partners.

Jane Morrison-Ross,
Chief Executive, South of Scotland Enterprise

Strategic Drivers

Stiùridhean Ro-innleachdail

This strategy will support and help deliver against national and international strategies and plans.

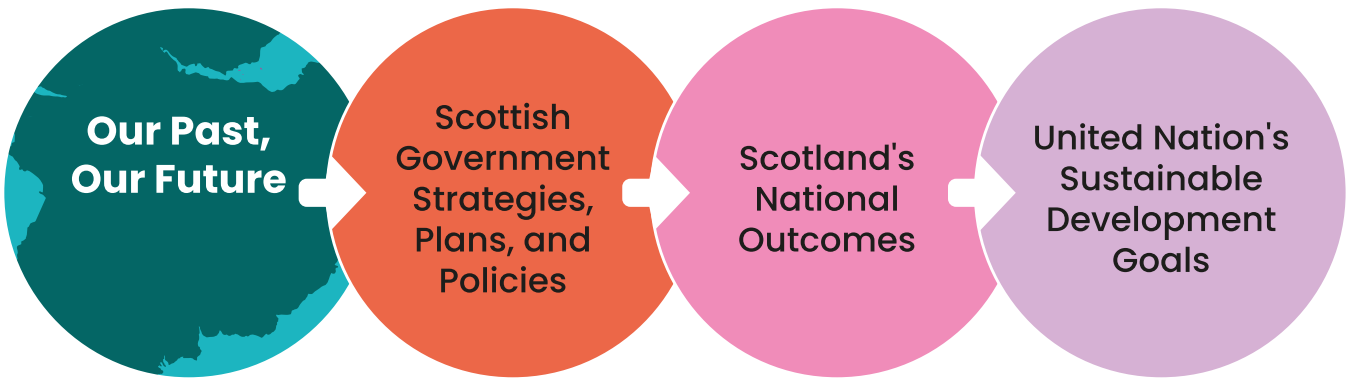


Diagram showing the strategy's alignment to Scottish Government and international outcomes and goals.

National strategies	Transition to net zero	Empower resilient and inclusive communities and places	Build a wellbeing economy
A Culture Strategy For Scotland		✓	✓
National Strategy for Economic Transformation	✓	✓	✓
National Planning Framework 4	✓	✓	✓
A Connected Scotland: social isolation and loneliness		✓	✓
Scottish Government Procurement Strategy 2022–2024	✓	✓	✓
Securing a green recovery on a path to net zero: climate change plan 2018–2032	✓	✓	✓
Future skills: action plan	✓		✓

National strategies	Transition to net zero	Empower resilient and inclusive communities and places	Build a wellbeing economy
Volunteering: action plan		✓	✓
Making Things Last: a circular economy strategy for Scotland	✓	✓	✓
Heat in Buildings Strategy	✓		
Fair Work Strategy		✓	✓
The Environment Strategy for Scotland	✓		
Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act		✓	✓
Infrastructure Investment Plan	✓	✓	✓
Scotland Outlook 2030	✓	✓	✓

Forthcoming strategies	Transition to net zero	Empower resilient and inclusive communities and places	Build a wellbeing economy
Innovation Strategy	✓	✓	✓
Biodiversity Strategy	✓		
Energy Strategy	✓		
Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategy		✓	✓



© Historic Environment Scotland 2023

You may re-use this information (excluding logos and images) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

Any enquiries regarding this document should be sent to:
Historic Environment Scotland
Longmore House
Salisbury Place
Edinburgh
EH9 1SH
+44 (0) 131 668 8600
www.historicenvironment.scot

Strategy imagery

Image 1 (page 3)
Christina McKelvie MSP, Minister for Culture,
Europe and International Development
©Creative Commons

Image 2 (page 9)
Glasgow ©Getty images

Image 3 (page 11)
Blackness Castle
©Historic Environment Scotland

Image 4 (page 14)
Dunfermline
©Visit Scotland

Image 5 (page 15)
The Ring of Brodgar
©Visit Scotland

Image 6 (page 19)
Thermal image of The Hill House ©Historic
Environment Scotland and
The National Trust for Scotland

Image 7 (page 20)
Edinburgh Castle
©Historic Environment Scotland

Image 8 (page 21)
Comrie Croft
©Historic Environment Scotland

Image 9 (page 23)
Muslim Scouts Hall, South
Bridge Resource Centre
©Historic Environment Scotland

Image 10 (page 24)
Pennan
©Historic Environment Scotland.

Image 11 (page 25)
Montrose Playhouse
©Montrose Playhouse

Image 12 (page 27)
Rubha Coigeach in Assynt
©Shutterstock

Image 13 (page 28)
Glamis Castle
©Visit Scotland

Image 14 (page 29)
The Ridge
©The Ridge

Image 15 (page 33)
Islay Woollen Mill
©Visit Scotland