



Island Communities Impact Assessment – Initial Screening

This ICIA is currently in process and a final approved version will be published with the resulting strategy in Spring 2023. The draft is being published at this stage to inform the consultation.

HES is a named relevant authority within the [Islands \(Scotland\) Act 2018](#) alongside a series of other public and Local Authorities with a direct or indirect role in delivery of the Historic Environment. The refresh process for the Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland therefore requires an initial screening to determine whether a Full or Partial Island Communities Impact Assessment will be needed. This initial screening presents existing Island Communities data and an approach to consultation to be factored into the design process for the new strategy.

The risk of significant differing impacts of the strategy to Island Communities are at this stage thought to be low based on the following key points:

- The Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland will be designed through an extensive consultation process which will include Island Authorities, organisations and public forums, directly testing whether any proposed objectives will have significantly different effects on island communities than on any other communities. The mid-term evaluation of the existing strategy in 2019 did not identify any specific concerns relating to Island communities but did highlight the need for additional emphasis around community empowerment.
- The Minister’s commissioning letter for Historic Environment Scotland (HES) to lead on the refresh of the strategy highlights the need to incorporate the Government’s increased focus on tackling inequality and on community empowerment, alongside the digital evolution and prioritising work to combat the effects of climate change.
- Islands will have different local needs and circumstances, in the same way that different communities across Scotland will have different circumstances. The Strategy plans to take the same approach to challenges regardless of location. HES has therefore not identified any new, significant issues through the formal ICIA initial screening process, concluding “no” for each of the Scottish Government’s key questions which define the need for a Full ICIA, rather than Partial:

Table 1: ICIA Screening Questions

Does your assessment identify any unique impacts on island communities?	No
Does your assessment identify any potential barriers or wider impacts?	No

Regarding the Historic Environment's strategic approach, does the evidence show different circumstances or different expectations or needs, or different experiences or outcomes? Are these different effects likely? Are these effects significantly different?	No
Could the effect amount to a disadvantage for an island community compared to the mainland or between island groups?	No

The screening evidence considered in reaching this conclusion is summarised below, following the Scottish Government's required approach.

Table 2: Initial Screening

Step One: Developing a clear understanding of your objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the policy, strategy or service either new or under review? • What are the objectives of the policy, strategy or service? • How are islands identified for the purpose of the policy, strategy or service? • What are the intended impacts/outcomes and how do these potentially differ in the islands?
<p><u>Background – The Existing Strategy under Review</u></p> <p>Our Place in Time (OPiT) is Scotland's current strategy for the historic environment, published in 2014. It sets out a vision for how the historic environment can be understood, valued, cared for and enjoyed. The existing strategic priorities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the cultural, social, environmental and economic value of our heritage continues to contribute to Scotland's wellbeing. • Investigating and recording our historic environment to continually develop our knowledge, understanding and interpretation of the past, and how best to conserve, sustain and protect it. • Caring for and protecting the historic environment in order to both enjoy and benefit from it, and to conserve and enhance it for future generations. • Sharing and celebrating the richness and significance of our historic environment. <p>OPiT sets a common set of objectives for all stakeholders involved in managing the historic environment and delivering associated activities, spanning public bodies, charities, trusts and private enterprises, giving transparency to users and the public.</p> <p>Recognising that the strategic context has changed since OPiT was published, Scottish Ministers have commissioned Historic Environment Scotland (HES) to review the strategy and ensure it is fit for a post-COVID world. The intention is to publish a new national strategy in Spring 2023 that builds on the current OPiT strategy.</p> <p>The new sector strategy will set out a shared five-year vision to 2028, outcomes and objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to optimise the historic environment's contribution to Scotland's National Performance Framework. It will complement other Scottish Government strategies including those for Culture and Scotland's museums, the Historic Environment Policy Scotland (HEPS), the National</p>

Planning Framework 4, Biodiversity, Climate Change, and the National Strategy for Economic Transformation. The key themes being considered in its development, which will be refined during the process, are:

- Addressing Climate Change
 - Decarbonising homes and industries
 - Adaptation and climate resilience
- Securing a stronger, fairer, greener economy
 - Green recovery opportunities
 - Fair work
- Supporting progress towards meeting child poverty targets
 - Increasing household incomes
 - Reducing direct costs
- Tackling inequality and promoting human rights
- Community empowerment
- Digital delivery
- Post-COVID economic recovery and renewal
- Creating a more sustainable and resilient sector

The current strategy is nationwide in scope and does not specifically identify Islands. The intended outcomes when it was developed were considered to be the same in the islands as on the mainland. The Islands Communities Impact Assessment was not in place when the existing strategy was developed. This refresh provides an opportunity to consider whether the intended objectives and outcomes for the strategy could potentially differ in the islands as the sector would not wish to make decisions that would unilaterally disadvantage the islands.

Step Two: Gather your data and identify your stakeholders

- What data is available about the current situation in the islands?
- How does any existing data differ between the islands?
- Are there any existing design features or mitigations in place?

Delivery in the sector is diverse, as are the extent of relationships with specific Island Communities. The design of the strategy will have to draw on the available public data sets which are used to monitor the overall performance of the sector (in annual strategic reviews for example), and which can be disaggregated to Island level. These will be used to inform the economic, social, and environmental impacts of the historic environment and where there are local concentrations of key beneficiary groups or pressures for a tailored local approach, including:

- National demographic and social surveys (e.g. Scottish Household Survey and SIMD) to track the catchment and beneficiaries for heritage assets, and to better understand local engagement;
- National labour market and visitor surveys (the IPS, GBTS, GBDVS) to model the tourism and construction impacts of existing historic environment operations, and to understand local communities' reliance on the employment generated through these channels.

- Asset registers to map the concentration of local traditionally built residential stock and employment space, scheduled and listed buildings, plus Buildings At Risk, to better understand the need for and scale of investment and skills.

These National surveys often struggle to produce reliable information for island communities, due to their sample sizes and collection methods, so this data will be supplemented with anecdotal and operational information gathered during the consultation process, including:

- Site management information from organisations operating attractions / sites across the Island Local Authorities, including HES, National Trust for Scotland and Historic Houses Association;
- Grants investment, including directly to organisations and individuals in island communities, including HES, National Lottery Heritage Fund and the Architectural Heritage Fund.
- Engagement through the community planning partnerships, economic development teams and planning authorities in Shetland, Orkney, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, the Highlands and Argyll & Bute.
- Records of advice and support to individuals and organisations in relation to protecting, conserving, understanding, and celebrating their historic environment in their island communities.
- Insights from NDPBs, thematic groups and intermediaries who have island communities amongst their members – such as Visit Scotland, Creative Scotland, ASVA, STA, SURF, BEFS, DTAS, A&BS, SFHA, IofA, MGS
- Previous consultations within the sector including for the Historic Environment Policy for Scotland: Two Years On, COVID19 sector surveys in 2020 and 2021, HES's Corporate Plan and specific projects like the Orkney Gateway.
- Feedback from members of existing heritage organisations and visitors, including regular surveys.
- People employed on or resident in the islands and working in the sector.

The existing evidence for Island Communities is set out below.

Engagement & Wellbeing

- **Stronger engagement:** engagement with the Historic Environment is marginally higher in island Local Authorities (LAs) than the Scottish average, with the Scottish Household Survey in 2019 reporting 39% of residents in island LAs visiting a historic site in the previous 12 months compared to 35% for Scotland as a whole.
- **Equal wellbeing:** primary research conducted by HES in 2019 to establish the links between heritage engagement and individuals' wellbeing did not find any statistically reliable differences in the rate or types of benefits reported between island and non-island areas, with 76% of respondents reporting that their

overall life satisfaction was improved through engagement with the historic environment.

- **Heritage shapes local places:** through local engagement and existing research we know that the historic environment is an integral part of island communities – both the built heritage and the intangible cultural heritage (ICH) shaping their sense of place, pride, and traditions.
- **Relative importance of Intangible Cultural Heritage:** the historic environment provides creative inspiration for a variety of activities and events on the islands and they may be more reliant on ICH than other Scottish communities.

Historic Environment Asset Base

The built historic environment has a diverse range of ownership and management structures, stakeholders, and levels of recognition and planning protection. Local areas will have taken different approaches to proposing buildings and sites for the varying levels of heritage recognition, and so will have varying ownership and management structures to plan around.

- **World Heritage status:** the islands have unique and significant heritage assets, including some with World Heritage status (Heart of Neolithic Orkney, St Kilda).
- **Scheduled monuments:** there are 336 scheduled monuments in the care of Scottish Ministers. These are managed by Historic Environment Scotland on behalf of Ministers. 54 of these 336 Properties in Care (PICs) are on islands, including 9 which are staffed visitor attractions. They are managed through a central Asset Management process and strategy, assessed against the same principles as mainland sites. Practical works are delivered through a regional structure of maintenance depots and skills and following HES's procurement strategy for contractors and materials (which follows the Scottish Government's statutory process).
- **Listed buildings:** Scotland has over 47,000 listed buildings, with a mix of private, public and third sector ownership. Many will be maintained and operated for a non-heritage use (e.g. as a home, a business or a public building like a swimming pool). Listing is a reactive process based on a submitted case, rather than a definitive list of Scotland's most significant historic buildings. As such, listing rates and recognition of heritage assets will vary between authority areas.
- **Traditional buildings:** establishing the total number of traditionally constructed buildings in Scotland, and consequentially the investment and skills required to maintain and adapt them, is problematic at national level and further work is required. There is no single, definitive source to establish the full stock of pre-1919 buildings. The best identified source is the commercial

GEOMNI database which suggests that 10-20% of Scotland's residential stock and up to a quarter of employment space is in buildings constructed pre-1919, or with elements dating from that period. Around 40% of the database is not classified by age, though GEOMNI advise that this is predominantly non-occupiable structures such as bridges and transport infrastructure. However, there is a significantly higher rate of gaps for rural and island areas for both residential and employment space which will have to be supplemented with local data and knowledge.

- **Lower levels of disrepair:** The Scottish House Condition Survey showed that over the period 2017-2019 the Island Authorities had significantly lower shares of urgent and critical disrepair to traditionally built residences than the Scottish average.
- **Higher climate-related risks:** HES's Climate Action Plan identified the islands' scheduled monuments (and other traditional buildings) as being at significant risk due to the high concentration of coastal sites affected by erosion and sea level rises, and the comparatively high exposure to weather conditions (wind, rain) than some mainland sites.

Economic Links and Impacts

- **Heritage is a key driver of islands tourism:** all the Islands Local Authorities have a higher reliance on tourism in their overall employment mix than the Scottish average (8%). Over a third of international visitors list the historic environment as their main motivation for visiting Scotland, and half of international visitors engage with the historic environment during their visit. Visitors that include a historic environment visit in their trip spent over £3bn in Scotland in 2019. While regional impact estimates are less robust (tables below), they still illustrate the importance of heritage to their key tourism sector:

Tourism Impact comparison VisitScotland Regions, 2019	Visitors spend (£m) (VisitScotland surveys)	SG Sustainable Tourism Businesses Turnover, £m	Gross Heritage Tourism Spend, £m (HES estimate)
Argyll & the Isles	£443	£229	£199
Ayrshire & Arran	£604	£479	£163
Highlands	£1,600	£554	£880
Orkney	£67	£31	£38
Outer Hebrides	£65	£24	£21
Shetland	£36	£11	£18
Scotland Total	£11,246	£8,338	£3.2 Bn

Link of Heritage & Tourism VisitScotland Regions, 2019	% of visitors motivated by Heritage	Rank in motives for visiting area	Implied heritage visitor numbers
Argyll & the Isles	45%	3	2,900,000

Ayrshire & Arran	27%	6	3,000,000
Highlands	55%	3	6,900,000
Orkney	57%	2	100,000
Outer Hebrides	32%	5	70,000
Shetland	49%	3	40,000
Scotland average	50%		

- **Tourism strategy development:** The way that different tourists (e.g., cruise ship visitors, campervan visitors, B&B visitors, family visitors, activity visits) spend on the islands varies, as it does with different visitor types on the mainland sites. The sector is working with VisitScotland and other local bodies to develop a national sustainable tourism approach and establish the best role for heritage through the existing OPiT Heritage Tourism Group.
- **Islands construction impact:** SHEA (Scotland's Historic Environment Audit) reports an estimated £1.2 billion is spent on repair & maintenance of traditionally constructed buildings in Scotland each year, with further employment benefits along the supply chain. Further work is required to establish the share of this total that is invested in repair and maintenance on Scottish islands, but it is likely to be a notable local employer. This is being explored through the current OPiT Skills Group.

In conclusion, there is scope for wider recognition of some of the additional challenges islands face as we move towards the next iteration of the strategy: their relative exposure to climate related deterioration of built stock, their higher maintenance cost base and relative exposure to heritage tourism to sustain local employment. However, there is nothing identified in our approach which is likely to have effects on island communities which are significantly different from those on other communities (including other island communities).

Step Three: Consultation

- Who do you need to consult?
- How will you carry out your consultation?
- What questions will you ask when considering how to address island realities?
- What information has already been gathered through consultations and what concerns have been raised?

HES has established a project team to coordinate the strategy review process, including Scottish Government Officials, and will be engaging with public, private and Third sector organisations as well as targeting opportunities to engage with harder to reach and 'seldom heard' audiences.

The initial stakeholder engagement process began at the June meeting of Scotland's Historic Environment Forum, with an introduction by the Minister and involving over 100 participants from across the sector in themed workshops. This initial engagement was then rolled out over the summer and provided opportunities both in person and

online. Given the need for a focus on Island communities key Islands authorities and representative groups were targeted and these included;

- Local authorities
- Development Trusts
- Academic institutions
- Third Sector organisations
- Community Groups
- Destination Management Organisations
- Enterprise Agencies
- Local interest groups
- Representative bodies and intermediaries
- Visitor attractions
- Businesses
- Other NDPB's and Government agencies

In general the emerging themes and priorities were similar across Scotland.

- People and communities should be at the centre of the strategy with specific emphasis on opportunities to increase diversity and support wellbeing through the historic environment.
- Practical guidance and signposting on how heritage organisations can meet the challenges of climate change and support the achievement of Scotland's wider net zero ambitions.
- Advocacy and lobbying where there are conflicting policies, regulatory barriers, or opportunities to demonstrate the value of historic environment's contribution to Scotland.
- The strategy should support maintaining and increasing resilience and financial sustainability through enabling collaboration, skills development, resource sharing, and opening collaboration opportunities with larger organisations to smaller organisations and individuals in the sector.
- The strategy should advocate for continued coherence and flexibility in the funding environment as well as encouraging a more coherent funding environment which will increase overall sustainability in sector.
- Embrace digital working and remote working as a means of increasing collaboration and knowledge exchange across historic environment organisations.
- Support new digital methodologies and skillsets as a means of managing and conserving historic environment.
- Continued spotlight on pathways and 'usefulness' / employability of traditional and emerging skills that support the historic environment.

However, with awareness and understanding of the challenges island communities face the emphasis on the utilisation of digital platforms should be positive as is a focus on the impact of climate change given their additional exposure.

The next step is for a wider online public consultation supported by further national and regional stakeholder meetings to give everyone the opportunity to feed in their

views and ideas on the proposed strategy. There is a specific optional field as part of the consultation which asks if the respondent is part of an Island community. The survey also asks a set question as to whether the respondent thinks that the proposals presented in the strategy might impact on people differently in island communities with a free text box to explain their response.

Feedback from this wider consultation will be used to inform the final version of the strategy which is due to be published in April 2023.

Step Four: Assessment

Initial Assessment

With regards to the design and delivery of the new strategy at this stage our initial assessment would be:

Does your assessment identify any unique impacts on island communities? **No**

Does your assessment identify any potential barriers or wider impacts? **No**

Does the evidence show different circumstances or different expectations or needs, or different experiences or outcomes (such as different levels of satisfaction, or different rates of participation)? **No** – some islands will have different circumstances, in the same way that different communities across Scotland will have different circumstances, and OPiT will plan to take the same approach to challenges regardless of location.

Are these different effects likely or significantly different? **No (see above)**

Could the effect amount to a disadvantage for an island community compared to the mainland or between island groups? **No**. There will be different pressures across communities in Scotland, but there is no evidence that the strategy adopting an inclusive approach will disadvantage island communities.

If your answers are NO to the above questions a full ICIA will be NOT be required and you can proceed to the final step.

All answers are “No” based on the evidence available and on the intended design approach, so a full ICIA is not required. The need for a full ICIA will be revisited following the consultation programme, should further Islands concerns become apparent.

Table 3: Recommendations for shaping the Strategy

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Please state how any adjustments are going to be made to your work to mitigate any effects on Island Communities. If no adjustments will be made please state this and include any justification.

We have specifically targeted representative stakeholders from Island Communities.

We have ensured we include digital engagement in addition to in person to help alleviate the challenges of travel distance and connectivity.

We have included a specific question in relation to the impact of the strategy on Island Communities.

Approved by*:

Job Title:

Date

Date logged:

Date published:

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