

Ian

From: Robin Kent [rk@robinkent.com]
Sent: 01 September 2004 18:51
To: Andrea Dixon
Cc: info
Subject: Re: Culture Commission[Scanned]

Dear Dr Boyle

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your consultation. As a registered access consultant, designer and accredited conservation architect, I am interested in all the areas you outline, including education for inclusiveness and disability equality, the development of artistic, cultural and social skills and the presentation and enjoyment of Scotland's cultural heritage in terms of the built heritage in particular. As a past senior architect with Historic Scotland, I am interested in the institutional infrastructure which protects Scotland's built heritage (ie Historic Scotland, The Scottish National Trust, the Historic Houses Association, local authorities, educational establishments and government departments concerned with caring for the built heritage, and also in its presentation, including the delivery of visitor services and access to them, to ensure the widest access. As a director of a specialist consultancy actively involved in these areas, I am also interested in marketing and promotion to increase and broaden the profile of the audience and the public engaging with cultural activity in Scotland. Finally, as a designer, I am interested in encouraging creativity and maximising the creative potential of the people of Scotland.

I would understand 'cultural rights for the Scottish citizen, and those of its creative community' to include the right to view and enjoy historic buildings, sites and monuments, and to be assured that these will remain available for our children and grandchildren to equally enjoy. This right implies the right to protect the cultural significance of the nation's built heritage from damage, and the right to visit historic buildings and sites that have received government grants and tax advantages, or other public funding, without further payment. These rights would of course need to be balanced with those of the building users and the community at large.

The key issues as we see them are 1. The unification of legislation relating to the protection of the cultural and natural heritage. 2. The separation of the protective and tourist related functions of Historic Scotland and its restructuring as a NDPB (Government has no business running the largest tourist agency in Scotland). 3. To balance this, increased support by government of the voluntary sector eg. the National Trust for Scotland and the large number of trusts and charities concerned with the built cultural heritage. 4. The introduction of a tax regime that favours rather than penalises those responsible for the cultural heritage, eg the abolition of VAT on repairs to historic buildings and the introduction of tax deductible repair costs for historic buildings, monuments and art objects which are available for public enjoyment. 5. The enhanced accessibility of the cultural heritage to as many disabled people as possible. 6. The acknowledgement that Scotland has a private and voluntary sector building conservation community which, with appropriate public sector support, is well able to meet the needs of the Scotland's built heritage, so that it is anachronistic and wasteful duplication for government to continue to dominate in this area. 7. The increasing and broadening of public funding for the built heritage, eg to include training, travel and study grants for craftspeople and professionals actively engaged in the conservation of the cultural heritage; grant aid for enhanced access to historic sites; grant aid for ongoing maintenance of historic buildings and monuments, rather than just when they have become candidates for 'Restoration'.

We hope that our comments are of interest and look forward to having the opportunity to offer further comment as your study proceeds.

Yours faithfully
For Robin Kent Ltd

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----- Original Message -----

From: Andrea Dixon
To: stacey@thelighthouse.co.uk
Cc: chris.small@product.org.uk
Sent: Wednesday, September 01, 2004 4:48 PM
Subject: Culture Commission

Dear Member

The Lighthouse has been asked by James Boyle, chair of the Cultural Commission to co-ordinate communication to the creative industries sector, seeking consultation on the remit of the commission. To that end attached is a letter from James Boyle which sets out the issues on which to respond.

I do hope that you can spare time to respond to the commission directly to the email in James Boyie's letter.

Best wishes

Dr Stuart MacDonald