

A Response to the Cultural Commission from the Council for Scottish Archaeology; the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and the Scottish Group of the Institute of Field Archaeology.

## 1.0 The Value of Archaeology and the Historic Environment

**“A sustainable society should seek to value and protect diversity and local distinctiveness and strengthen local community and cultural identity. The historic environment is a key component in achieving this aim”.**

DETR 1998

1.1 Scotland has some of the finest archaeological remains to be found anywhere in Europe. It is still possible to enter tombs which have stood for well over 5,000 years (older than the Pyramids) or to walk into 2,000 year-old defended buildings which still stand to roof height. Palaces, castles and cathedrals of queens, bishops and princes stand alongside the settlements of ordinary people. They are all part of modern landscapes, contributing to our sense of identity and revealing the great diversity of human life by which our modern world has been created.

1.2 Viewing UNESCO's definition (link to UNESCO on Cultural Commission's website) from the perspective of the historic environment, cultural heritage represents what we have a right to inherit from our predecessors and a duty to pass on to future generations. Visible forms of culture such as monuments, books and works of art are so precious that all peoples have the responsibility to ensure their protection.

1.3 Culture and cultural heritage are inseparable – they are inter-twined with national identity. The Historic Environment is central to how we see ourselves and we are disappointed to see that this is not reflected in Cultural Commission's interim report.

## 2.0 Current Priorities

2.1 The ~~proposed audit of the historic environment recommended to the Minister by the Historic Environment Advisory Council for Scotland (HEACS) is important for a number of reasons~~

- we cannot begin to determine what we have the right to inherit or have access to unless we know about it in the first place
- its significance is determined by professionals and by the people
- information needs to be made accessible

2.2 The HEACS report also highlights the inequalities between the natural environment and the historic environment in terms of status and support. It further states that there is currently little information on the contribution of the historic environment to Scotland's economic and social well-being. We would welcome more support for the work of HEACS and the audit.

2.3 We do, of course, have funding concerns for the historic environment, but more crucially we want to ~~strengthen partnership, working together and recognise the value of the historic environment~~. We envisage stronger links between the historic sector and the creative industries and tourism.

### 3.0 Comments on the Cultural Commission's Questions and Examples of Best Practice

**3.1 If cultural rights are to be enshrined in law, additional resources need to be found for local authorities, agencies and NGO's. Cultural policy and standards need to be developed in partnership with stakeholders and by a new "Cultural Commission" that has responsibility for guardianship. These cultural rights should be linked to other areas of social policy by their outcomes and working practices or delivery.**

**3.2 The process of considering the value of cultural heritage offers many opportunities for cross-cutting initiatives such as linkage with community planning. Local communities can contribute to the debate about the value of their local heritage and what the priorities are. If a new body is to be set up, it must be inclusive.**

**3.3 Local authorities are key to successful delivery and "adequate" should be defined. Local authorities must have an archaeology service as well as other cultural services and set standards for that service to the public. The inclusion of good practice case studies should be worked up. There are many good examples where local authorities, groups and organisations have incorporated cultural heritage in programmes and initiatives that focus on archaeology and the Historic Environment.**

- **Highland Archaeology Week (HAW)** is an annual event each October half-term highlighting archaeology and heritage in the Highland Area. The Archaeology Unit of Highland Council promotes the initiative (e.g. producing a programme and a website, advertising and media coverage), with events organised by community groups, Heritage Attractions and museums, professional archaeologists and groups such as NTS, Historic Scotland, Forest Enterprise as well as local enthusiasts. Launched in 1994, the initiative regularly features over 100 events, with a wide spectrum of activities from prehistoric metal-making, lectures, guided walks and site visits, children's activities, re-enactments, craft demonstrations, and theatre, culminating in a free two-day conference held in Inverness where archaeologists working in the Highlands present their latest discoveries to an audience from across Scotland.

**3.4 It is not just companies that have a role to play in the delivery of cultural services. We represent and deliver cultural services to the whole of Scotland through our membership, training and outreach programmes. We welcome working together with our partners such as Historic Scotland, RCAHMS, local authorities and the National Trust for Scotland to deliver shared objectives.**

### 4.0 Examples of partnership delivery

#### Arts activities

Archaeology can act as a starting point for arts and crafts events, projects and festivals:

- **The Minehowe Knowhow Festival** (Orkney, June 2002). This four day event took an archaeological excavation of an Iron Age site as the inspiration for a series of activities which attempted to recreate domestic items using ancient

technology. Activities included cookery, metal smelting and jewellery manufacture, pottery, story telling, leather and bone working and making clothing. The festival was widely promoted and achieved high attendance figures from local residents and visitors, as well as attracting participants from across Europe.

The Cultural Co-ordinators scheme provides a real opportunity to develop arts and archaeology linkages into schools.

- The Heritage Education Officers Group is making information available to Cultural Co-ordinators about shared expertise, initiatives and programmes. It is providing a practical partnership between those in formal educational roles and those entrusted with the care and future use of cultural resources.

The creative industries such as moving image/film also have strong links to archaeology and the Historic Environment.

- Mainstream archaeology programmes such as *Time Team* can achieve audiences of up to 4 million for UK terrestrial broadcasts (plus further international audiences for repeat satellite broadcasts) with, in *Time Team's* case, a split into 51% ABC1 and 49% C2DE segments, as well as crossing all age segments. In television terms, archaeology has been described as "*the new gardening*" with some 250 archaeological and related BBC broadcasts in a recent 12 month period. Therefore the link is powerful in creating profile for the national and regional components of Scotland's Historic Environment, and substantial increases have been noted in local tourist centre enquiries in the immediate aftermath of a broadcast archaeology programme highlighting that area. Similarly, the Historic Environment is a crucial feature of more general broadcasting or filming, whether featured in travel or gardening programmes (e.g. historic gardens or those attached to Heritage Visitor Attractions) or as backdrops to broadcasts and films, as shown by "the *Braveheart* effect" or "*Monarch of the Glen* Country".

#### Community Engagement and Lifelong Learning

Archaeology can contribute in a number of ways to the delivery of learning and to community engagement:

- community use of schools for recreation, where archaeology has been very successfully used in programmes of after-school activity, whether formally through schemes such as *Shorewatch* or the *Young Archaeologists' Club* network. **Young Archaeologists' Clubs** (of which there are currently 14 in Scotland) allow children between 8 and 16 to explore archaeology in a safe and fun environment. Each branch is individual, producing programmes of activities that are suitable for their environment and location.
- The Archaeological Research in Progress conference held every year, organised by the Council for Scottish Archaeology and the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland provides a forum for learning about Scottish archaeology and local-based projects.

CSA co-ordinates **Scottish Archaeology Month** every September as part of European Heritage Days in partnership with the Scottish Civic Trust's *Doors Open Days* initiative, which covers buildings still in use. SAM continues to grow from strength to strength with 174 events in 2004 attracting 16,000+ visitors.

### Economic activity

The value of Scotland's Historic Environment for local communities and as an asset for attracting visitors into Scotland and to encourage Scots to travel within Scotland was seriously understated in the previous Cultural Strategy.

- 65% of visitors associate Scotland with "*interesting history and culture*",
- "*visiting built heritage*" is the second most popular activity, undertaken by 69% of all visitors,
- 92% agree Scotland would appeal highly to visitors "*interested in history and heritage*",
- while overseas visitors form 14% of the Scottish total, heritage visitor attraction surveys give overseas visitor figures of between 34% and 49%,
- 83% of overseas tourists visit "*castles, monuments, churches, etc*", and
- in Orkney, 58% of UK visitors and 84% of overseas visitors visit "*archaeological sites*", as do 64% of UK visitors to Shetland.

Historic Environment attractions dominate national lists of most visited Scottish attractions (e.g. Edinburgh and Stirling castles), with further regional domination by Historic Environment attractions.

There are a number of commercial archaeological organisations operating in Scotland. They carry out work prior to proposed development to assess the impact on the archaeology and the historic environment. The role of commercial archaeology sector is important not just for development control involvement, but also as organisations that carry out research, interpretation and presentation. A significant amount of excavation and survey work has been carried out in recent years through developer-funded projects. Many local authorities now require a level of public participation to be included in any development-led survey and excavation work. This allows local people to get involved and learn about what is being discovered as well as developing their technical and social skills.

### Community participation

Volunteers and local groups already carry out survey and excavation work, both independently and with professional archaeologists. These projects create opportunities for cross-cutting initiatives with, for example, health promotion strategies (getting outdoors and active) and citizenship programmes (stewardship of the local environment).

- **Shorewatch** is an initiative for groups of all ages trains up local groups to identify and monitor coastal archaeological structures and remains they contain. Current estimates suggest that 12-18,000 archaeological sites are endangered on Scottish coasts, an average occurrence of one per half-mile. Involvement with schools-based groups and other Young Archaeologists' Clubs has been highly successful with projects ranging from Unst (Scotland's most northerly inhabited island) to the Scottish Borders.

**The three bodies represented in this response welcome the opportunity to work with the Cultural Commission and hope that you will find these comments of use. We will be delighted to follow up any questions you may have.**

The **Council for Scottish Archaeology (CSA)** works in partnership with all those involved or interested in archaeology (either professionally or through interest groups) to promote awareness, active participation and ownership of the future for this unique resource.

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The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland (SoAS), founded in 1780, is an independent and autonomous organisation, with some 3,500 Fellows who represent a wide spectrum of the public from academic researchers and authors, professional archaeologists and historians through to members of local societies active at grass-roots level.

The Scottish Group of the Institute of Field Archaeology (SGIFA). The Institute gives archaeologists the status to practise as recognised professionals. It develops and advertises standards and guidance for archaeological work, promotes high standards of vocational training, represents the profession to government and other bodies, provides an exchange of information and provides services for its members.

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The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland was founded in 1780, and was incorporated by Royal Charter in 1783. There are now some 3500 Fellows around the world, as well as 25 Honorary Fellows elected for their outstanding scholarship. It is the second oldest antiquarian society in Britain. From its foundation the Society started to collect antiquities, manuscripts and books, and these formed the nucleus from which the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland was founded.

Today this collection is part of the National Museums of Scotland with which the Society maintains close links. The offices of the Society are housed in the museum, and many of the Society's well-attended meetings and conferences take place in Museum facilities. Last year over 2,000 people in total attended events organised by the Society.

Publications are an important element of our activities, and the Society publishes an annual journal presenting the results of nationally important archaeological fieldwork, and also one-off publications such as conference proceedings and archaeological reports.

The Society is involved in partnership ventures with other leading heritage bodies in Scotland, including Historic Scotland, the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, the National Trust for Scotland and the Council for Scottish Archaeology.

As the senior antiquarian body in Scotland, the Society has an important role in the cultural life and heritage of Scotland. It draws on a wide range of experience through the Fellowship, and provides an impartial voice independent of the opinions of Government, University or Agency. The Society receives numerous consultations on different matters relating to heritage, and is represented on many committees and councils.

### The Society Staff

This presently comprises a Director, an Administrator, a Publications Assistant, an Assistant Treasurer, the Proceedings Editor, and a Publications Production Manager. Apart from the Director, all staff are part-time, and most staff on the publications side work on a freelance basis.

The Society's overall running involves elected officers; a President, 3 Vice presidents, a Treasurer and 12 members of Council. There are several committees devoted to various aspects of the Society; Publications, Programme, Research, Heritage and Finance.

The post of Assistant Treasurer will fall vacant on 1st January 2005. The duties include:

Dealing with incoming and outgoing payments

Staff salary payments

Fellowship subscriptions: checking and chasing non-payers (Access database used for Fellows information)

Preparation of annual accounts

The duties should take up approximately 3 days or 21 hours per week. The Society is willing to pay the standard hourly rate for the time worked. There can be considerable flexibility over when the hours are worked.

The Society has a website <http://www.socantscot.org/> which has further details of our activities and publications.

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