The National Federation of Roofing Contractors Limited (NFRC) is the UK’s largest roofing trade association with over 1000 trade contractors and 165 Associate Members (manufacturers, suppliers and service providers), NFRC represents over 70% of the roofing industry by value. Having operated for over 120 years, NFRC has established itself as the voice of the roofing industry, constantly adapting to change and innovation to ensure its members are at the forefront of the sector.

As of 2010, the NFRC has been authorised by the UK Government to run the first Competent Person Scheme for roofing, CompetentRoofer, which allows roofing contractors to self-certify on Building Regulations for roofing refurbishment work. The scheme aims to help to marginalise the less professional roofing companies that exist in all markets.

Introduction

Conservation of the UK’s heritage in the built environment is critical and needs to be strongly encouraged. With so many of our country’s finest estates controlled by Historic Scotland it is absolutely vital that the new Historic Environment Scotland body takes a lead in ensuring that our heritage buildings are correctly maintained and repaired. The long term sustainability of these buildings can be assured by correct workmanship.

As well as a need for this building stock to be maintained appropriately, there is a need to ensure that sufficient levels of training are made available and supported, and that relevant apprenticeships are in place. Without ensuring that those coming into the building profession are trained in the correct specialist skills to work on heritage buildings, the availability of these skills will become scarce, and our heritage buildings will suffer.

The Scottish Housing Condition Survey 2012 highlights the a large number of pre-1919 buildings in Scotland which require repair and maintenance work to be carried out on them. The NFRC believes that at present the Scottish Government and its agencies do not take a sufficiently strong enough lead on insisting that repairs and maintenance to its traditional buildings use correctly skilled workmen. The changes made by the Historic Environment Scotland Bill provide an excellent opportunity for this to be reversed.

Training

Without encouraging incentives for contractors to train in the skills needed for this sector, the skills will eventually die out and Scotland’s traditional buildings will be ruined by work completed incorrectly. For as long as Historic Environment Scotland does not make the commitment to only using appropriately skilled craftsmen in all disciplines, there will remain a reluctance from contractors to commit time and resources to training a workforce in these core skills.

NFRC therefore calls on the new Historic Environment Scotland body to set a deadline date, after which it will only use CSCS cardholders for building work. This will give all specialist trades time to ensure training is in place and that demand can be met. All publicly funded projects must contain a stipulation in the contract that only appropriately trained professionals will be used. This will assist Historic Scotland to fulfil its responsibility for
protecting and enhancing the historic environment across Scotland. Without this lead from organisations such as Historic Environment Scotland, these skills will become redundant.

The lack of appropriate traditional skills is reflected by Preliminary Repair and Maintenance Skills: The Research Report undertaken in 2003 (as referenced in Traditional Building Skills), which identified only 30% of those working as “tradesmen” were suitably qualified, for example with 33% of stonemasons qualified, 33% in training and the remainder having no training.

CSCS Carded workforce

For Historic Environment Scotland to make possession of the Heritage Skills CSCS Card a requirement for working on one of their properties, there must be a critical mass of cardholders. In working with the Lead Contractors Association and the National Heritage Training Group, English Heritage has demonstrated that this critical mass can be reached (approximately 75% of lead workers hold a CSCS card). The requirement for all specialist lead workers working on significant projects on the English Heritage estate to hold CSCS cards has begun and will run through to 2015.

With the guarantee from English Heritage to use CSCS carded workmen only for lead-work, the industry has also made the commitment to ensure there are sufficient numbers of correctly trained workmen. It is vital that under the new model, Historic Environment Scotland also adopts and expands this practice.

Condition of Scotland’s Traditional Buildings

The Scottish House Conditions Survey 2012 states:

Just over eighty percent (81%) of dwellings in Scotland have some disrepair. Older dwellings are more likely to have some form of disrepair with 92% of those built before 1919 having some disrepair compared with 54% of dwellings built after 1982.

Pre 1919 – 27% have extensive disrepair
Post 1982 – 5% have extensive disrepair

Possible Impacts of Deteriorating Scottish Built Heritage

Tourism

The Scottish Government has stated that tourism is a key sector with estimates indicating that the historic environment contributes more than 41,000 FTE employees in Scotland and over £2.3 billion to Scotland’s economy each year (ECOTEC 2009 – Economic Impact of the Historic Environment in Scotland), it is logical to conclude that it is a worthwhile investment to ensure the correct upkeep of these properties.

Historic Scotland’s Traditional Building Skills Audit stated “There is a need for a greater focus on long term sustainable and better repair and maintenance of traditional buildings because these are the buildings we live and work in. As our building stock gets older it will require increasing levels of maintenance. Lack of maintenance, or repairs which are poorly executed, and increasingly matters for concern.”

Energy Efficiency
The residential sector accounts for 33% of carbon emissions in Scotland. Of the existing domestic structures we have today, 85% will still be in use by 2050. Climate Change (Scotland) Act has specified an 80% reduction in carbon emissions.

The Confidential Reporting on Structural Safety for Scottish Buildings report\(^5\) stated “When damage does occur to the envelope of a building, the energy performance of the building may be reduced, but opportunities could be taken with repair and maintenance programmes to install energy improving measures.”

The Historic Scotland Traditional Building Skills Strategy\(^6\) stated “A well maintenance building is one which is more energy efficient” and “The adaptation of Scotland’s existing building stock and ongoing maintenance over wholesale replacement are critically important to achieving our low carbon objective” and “The focus of any action to reduce carbon emissions in Scotland therefore must focus heavily on the domestic stock.”

Historic Scotland’s Short Guide Fabric Improvements for Energy Efficiency in Traditional Buildings\(^7\) states: “It should be said that proper and regular maintenance is a prerequisite to undertaking energy efficiency improvements in a traditional building. If a building is not watertight there is little point in making energy efficiency upgrades”, such as the home insulation.

The Scottish Government issued Homes that don’t cost the earth - A consultation on Scotland’s Sustainable Housing Strategy\(^8\), in June 2012. Within this consultation it outlined a hierarchy of needs to look after properties.

Looking after your home - a hierarchy of needs
Looking after your home: What is most important?

1. Make sure that your home is wind and watertight and that it is structurally sound; make sure that it stays that way by carrying out regular maintenance.
2. Make sure that work is done properly because poor quality repairs may be ineffective and can cost more in the long run.
3. Consider retrofitting appropriate insulation.
4. Make sure that your home is properly ventilated because this is essential to keep it healthy.
5. Review your boiler to ensure that it is efficient.
6. Ensure that points 1-5 have been addressed before considering microrenewable technology.

The Scottish Government has acknowledged that “Improving Condition Homes can only become more energy efficient if they are in a good state of repair\(^9\).”

Conclusion
Ensuing that there are sufficient numbers of correctly trained craftsmen to service the heritage properties under the remit of the new Historic Environment Scotland body is vital. Industry will take its lead from Historic Environment Scotland and, as it has been shown with the Lead Contractors Association in England, it will commit resources to ensuring there is training provision if there is a demand for those skills.

\(^8\) Scottish Government, Homes that don’t cost the earth: a consultation on Scotland’s Sustainable Housing Strategy (June 2012) (available at: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0039/00395756.pdf)
The proposed introduction of Historic Environment Scotland provides a perfect opportunity to promote the skills required to repair and maintain Scotland’s Built Heritage for future generations which will also have a positive impact on tourism and energy efficiency.

Additionally, the NFRC feels that the role that Historic Environment Scotland could have in giving advice to those seeking to undertake work on non-Historic Environment Scotland buildings could be ground-breaking. Whilst Historic Environment Scotland cannot insist that CSCS cardholders are used, they can strongly advise private property owners of a) the benefits of using correctly skilled craftsmen and b) the potential impact both financially and in terms of the overall upkeep of the property in not employing appropriately skilled workmen.

This could build on the very successful Historic Scotland Inform Guides which will assist property owners in determining work to undertake and how to identify a contractor with the appropriate skills to undertake this work.

The introduction of Historic Environment Scotland as the new lead body for Scotland's historic environment will give the organisation considerably more freedom, and the NFRC hopes that this will be used to best effect.
Appendix - Further Statistics of Interest

The Scottish Small Towns Report stated that “every town surveyed had instance of serious disrepair.” The survey results suggested that some towns had a higher incidence of disrepair where in excess of 80% of the properties surveyed required some form of maintenance. The towns surveyed which fared better still required between 50% and 75% requiring maintenance.

The report suggested that approximately 70% of the properties surveyed would benefit from or will be required to have works carried out to remove serious defects.

Scottish Stone Liaison Group’s (SSLG) “Safeguarding Glasgow’s Stone-built Heritage” (the “Glasgow Project”)
Traditionally constructed dwellings, generally classified as those dating to before 1919, make up approximately 20% (446,000 dwellings in all) of Scotland’s building stock.

“97% of stone buildings in Glasgow would require some repairs by 2020.”

The Confidential Reporting on Structural Safety for Scottish Buildings (SCOSS)
This report concerned work carried out between August 2005 and August 2007 in collecting information from Local Authorities in Scotland on materials and debris that fell from buildings, and concerns about materials or components that might fall.

Twenty five Local Authorities provided 1,275 reports and short descriptions of incidents were given in many of the reports. Some examples, such as falls of masonry were potentially serious, and illustrate the risks of personal injuries or deaths to passing members of the public.

The age of buildings was an important feature with over 80% being estimated as at around 100 years old (therefore deemed as traditional buildings).

There was a standard list of categories for materials concerned and 65% of incidents involved stone walls or roofs.

Audit Scotland
In September 2007, Audit Scotland stated that 45% of university buildings north of the border needed major repairs compared to a UK average of 36% and just 34% in England. The report estimated that around £700m would be needed to bring the higher education estate up to standard, with almost 70% of the backlog split between the universities of Strathclyde, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Heriot-Watt and Dundee.

“The condition of buildings in Scotland’s higher education (HE) sector is improving, with more money going into their development and upkeep. But institutions, the Scottish Funding Council and the Scottish Government need to tackle a growing maintenance backlog.”

An Audit Scotland report published today (13/09/2007), Estate management in higher education, says there should be a sustained commitment to maintaining and developing the estate, which is worth almost £5 billion.”

An Audit Scotland report issued on 07/05/2009 stated:
“The report focuses on the 12,400 properties owned by Scotland’s councils. In some, over 90% of buildings are in good condition. But across Scotland, one in four council buildings are in poor or bad condition and 23% are unsuitable for the services being delivered from them. Over 1,550 buildings (14%) fail in both respects.”

“only half of councils have strategies for managing and maintaining property”.

“A property maintenance backlog totaling £1.4 billion was reported by councils, although the actual figure is likely to be higher as nine councils were unable to provide information on this. Of 28 councils able to report on changes to their property maintenance backlog, two-thirds said that it is increasing. Unless the backlog is tackled, there is a risk that buildings currently in satisfactory condition will deteriorate.”