

## CULTURE, TOURISM, EUROPE AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

### EXTERNAL AFFAIRS INQUIRY

#### SUBMISSION FROM HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND

##### Introduction

Historic Environment Scotland is a charity and public body leading the way in protecting, understanding and sharing Scotland's historic environment, for today and for the future.

We care for more than 300 sites of national importance all across the country and are the largest operator of paid visitor attractions in Scotland.

We look after internationally significant archives and artefacts.

We are at the forefront of investigating and researching the historic environment and addressing the impacts of climate change on its future.

We protect our historic places through designations and consents, promote their sustainable development, and provide millions of pounds each year to local communities to repair and revitalise their historic environment.

We provide advice and guidance about the historic environment and offer a wide range of training and learning opportunities.

We lead and enable delivery of *Our Place in Time*, Scotland's national strategy for the historic environment. It sets out a vision of how our historic environment can be understood, valued, cared for and enjoyed. We work in partnership with other organisations and individuals to deliver *Our Place in Time* and its benefits to Scotland's people.

At Historic Environment Scotland, we want the historic environment to make a real difference to people's lives. A difference to our health, to our economy, to our culture, to our environment. We want heritage to involve everyone so that we all benefit.

Our new Corporate Plan, [Heritage for all](#), sets out this vision and the 5 outcomes we want to achieve to help realise it:

1. The historic environment makes a real difference to people's lives
2. The historic environment is looked after, protected and managed for the generations to come
3. The historic environment makes a broader contribution to the economy of Scotland and its people
4. The historic environment inspires a creative and vibrant Scotland
5. The historic environment is cared for and championed by a high-performing organisation

In March 2019, we released our first International Strategy, [Partnering Globally](#), with our ambition to be a recognised international centre of expertise which promotes the value of Scotland's internationally significant heritage and involves people and helps them to understand, protect and celebrate our shared global heritage.

*Partnering Globally* is underpinned by Scottish Government's *International Framework* and focuses on aligned areas such as cultural relations, good global citizenship, tackling climate change, strengthening partnerships in Europe, quality research and promoting and bringing business to Scotland.

## Engaging with the European Union

### What principles should inform the focus of the Scottish Government's external affairs policy with regard to the European Union?

2018 was the European Year of Culture Heritage (EYCH) and following on from such a successful year, EU institutions are working on its legacy by maintaining its spirit of cooperation and policy dialogue across all policy areas. In November 2018, the Commission released their 'European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage' outlining a number of short to medium term actions to mainstream cultural heritage; whilst the Council backed 'Work Plan for Culture 2019-2022' and the Commission's 'A New European Agenda for Culture' both place culture heritage, and its sustainability, as a priority for the coming years. As a devolved matter for member states, and with the momentum high from the European year, cultural policy, and especially cultural heritage, remains a field where there is great scope for regions to engage and influence the EU. As the Framework states cultural heritage 'is a shared resource, raising awareness of common history and values, and reinforcing a sense of belonging to a common European cultural and political space'<sup>1</sup>. As a result, culture and the importance of our shared cultural heritage should be a focus of any future external affairs policy.

Further to this, the successes of the EU trans-national cooperation programmes, such as Horizon2020, Erasmus+ and Creative Europe, and the collaborative and partnership principles upon which they are based, should inform the focus of new Scottish Government external affairs policy. The historic environment and our appreciation, enjoyment, learning and understanding of it has benefitted and advanced from EU funding through its trans-national cooperation programmes, through projects like the Shetland Amenity Trust led '[Follow the Vikings](#)' (Creative Europe funded) which has Irish, Norwegian, Danish, Icelandic and Swedish partners. [Research](#) commissioned by Historic Environment Scotland in 2017 assessed the European Union's contribution to the historic environment in Scotland from 2007 – 2016 and found over 280 projects had received a minimum of £36.8m in EU funding. Similar research was carried out for Creative Scotland, Museum Galleries Scotland and Historic England. Trans-national funds and INTERREG (part of European regional development funding – ERDF) made up around £9.8million of this Scottish total, with £5m coming from the Horizon2020 research and its predecessor programme the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework. Significant funding from the EU's research and development focused programme shows the importance and relevance of heritage science, social research into heritage and identity, new technology and the reconceptualising of the historic built environment in meeting some

---

<sup>1</sup> Page 1, European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage:  
<https://ec.europa.eu/culture/sites/culture/files/library/documents/staff-working-document-european-agenda-culture-2018.pdf>

of the biggest societal and environmental challenges we face today, including climate change mitigation and adaptation and urban regeneration.

**Are there examples of best practice for ways in which nations / regions from non-EU Member States engage with and influence the EU?**

The European Year of Culture Heritage (EYCH), as a decentralised initiative, serves as good example of nations/regions from non-EU Member States engaging with, influencing and supporting the EU. Its governance framework included a National Coordinators' Group from 28 EU Member States and 9 associated countries and a Stakeholders' Committee representing 38 European cultural heritage networks and international organisations, set up to assist implementation. Dialogue groups sat below and feed in and informed the process.

Specialist networks had a large role to play in the EYCH, in its creation, direction and implementation and they continue to do so with sustaining its legacy at institutional and civil levels. Participation in specialist networks is usually not limited to being part of an EU member state and so the relevance and utilisation of these networks should be considered after the UK leaves the EU. Many Scottish organisations, charities and companies are already well embedded in networks relating to their sector and specialism. Some of these networks are tailored specifically for national and regional bodies, such as the European Heritage Heads Forum, which our CEO sits on, and the European Archaeology Council.

Third country regions and their representatives can still engage and input via Council supported Open Method of Coordination working groups, provided their membership is approved unanimously by the group, whilst Scottish organisations, individuals and representatives of civil society can still apply and hold membership of Commission expert groups provided an international agreement is in place. If not, limited participation can still occur through invites to experts to present, the commissioning of studies or the gathering of view through European agencies, green papers, public consultations and hearings.

**What should be the focus of the business plans for the Scottish Government Innovation and Investment Hub offices in Berlin, Brussels, Dublin, London and Paris be?**

We would hope that by having culture and cultural heritage embedded as principles of Scottish Government's external affairs policy, we would see programming of culture and culture heritage activities and initiatives in the hub offices' business plans.

**How can the Scottish Government Innovation and Investment Hub offices best support the Scottish Government's external affairs policy?**

N/A

**How can the Scottish Government's Innovation and Investment Hub offices be evaluated effectively?**

N/A

**How should the Innovation and Investment Hub offices most effectively engage with other Scottish organisations such as Scottish Development International and Visit Scotland?**

Having just released our first International Strategy, we are keen to work more with the Innovation and Investment Hub offices to see where we can best support each other. Being an ambitious strategy, which focuses on commercial growth and global markets for our organisation, and with the international offices' strength in trade, we will be seeking their input and advice to help deliver the strategy and meet our objectives. We would hope that productive engagement and exchange would bring benefits to the historic environment sector in Scotland and its promotion and appreciation internationally.

As highlighted above, many Scottish organisations are already involved with specialist networks and working groups relating to their field. The hubs may want to reach out to organisations to find out more about the networks and their involvement and consider where there may be synergies with their own objectives and business plans.

The hubs could also look to Scottish organisations to provide them with promotional materials or work with them to create mini-exhibitions and similar in their country location. A rotating spotlight on Scottish organisations could be another potential to demonstrate Scottish culture and further promote Scotland as an attractive place to visit and do business. Historic Environment Scotland supported the opening of the Paris hub office in February 2019 by demonstrating our digital technologies and presenting our world-leading climate change research to guests.

Reaching out to Scottish organisations and opening up communication channels like this will help foster good working relationship between the hub offices and Scottish organisations. Having a formalised network or virtual space may also assist with facilitating the above and ensure all parties are well informed of current activity and direction. Lastly, the use of office space and facilities for members, such as Scotland House in London and Scotland House in Brussels via Scotland Europa membership, is of benefit to organisations. We do, however, understand that this model cannot be replicated in every location.

**Engagement with the rest of the world**

**What principles should inform the Scottish Government's international engagement? For example, should economic priorities be the key priority or cultural / 'soft power' priorities?**

We would like to see the added value that culture and cultural heritage bring to international engagement inform the principles of Scottish Government's international engagement. As a country, the United Kingdom ranked number one on the 2018's Portland Soft Power 30 Index, with the UK's top performance index being Culture and Engagement. The reciprocal yet unique display of culture, and particularly cultural heritage, in international exchange shapes the basis for meaningful engagement between parties. On a global platform, there is successful and long-lasting cooperation and best practice sharing amongst cultural and

cultural heritage organisations and networks, most notably in UNESCO and its World Heritage Centre. The growth of World Heritage, since its establishment in 1972 under the World Heritage Convention, is testament to the universal value and appreciation given to cultural heritage.

We would also like to highlight the Scottish Ten project (2009-2014) as a case study of what cultural heritage can bring to international engagement and building relationships. The Scottish Ten project, which our predecessor Historic Scotland led on, saw us digitally document the then five World Heritage Sites in Scotland and a further five internationally significant heritage sites, including Mount Rushmore in the USA, the Sydney Opera House in Australia and the Eastern Qing Tombs in China. The good relationships built by this extensive project continue to advance.

In January 2017 we signed an international agreement with the University of Stirling and The Palace Museum (Forbidden City) in Beijing, China to establish research collaborations for heritage and conservation. We were also gifted two replica terracotta warriors at this time. This working relationship continues with more upcoming activity planned.

We have continued a successful working relationship, based on skills and knowledge exchange, with the National Park Service in the USA. Their Technical Preservation Superintendent for Washington D.C. is a keynote speaker for our Monuments in Monuments conference (looking at the conservation challenges around caring for carved stones and objects inside buildings) in September this year.

In October 2019 we are hosting the launch of the new global Climate Heritage Network in Edinburgh. This aims to connect heritage organisations and others to develop and share best practice in climate change action and showcase how heritage can contribute to the global climate change agenda. This stems from an invitation for HES to address the Global Climate Action Summit in San Francisco in Sept 2018.

**How should the Scottish Government prioritise its international engagement – for example, should the locations prioritised be based on a geography or policy focus?**

N/A

**What should be the key aims of the Scottish Government's international offices in Beijing, Ottawa, Toronto and Washington DC?**

N/A

**Currently, the Scottish Government has international engagement strategies with Canada, China, India, Pakistan and the USA. Do these strategies and their geographic focus remain appropriate post-Brexit?**

N/A

**How can the Scottish Government's international engagement be evaluated effectively?**

N/A

**How should the Scottish Government's international offices most effectively engage with other Scottish organisations such as Scottish Development International and Visit Scotland?**

As answered for the European engagement question, we are happy to work with the international offices to see how we can best promote Scotland and showcase the expertise and innovation that the historic environment sector holds in Scotland. The same points and sentiment about creating channels of communication apply for the international office as they do the European ones.

Along with European networks, Scottish organisations are likely to already work closely, and have developed relationships with international specialist networks. In September 2019, at the Engine Shed in Stirling (our national building conservation centre), we are hosting USA based The Preservation Trades first workshop outside of the USA which should see over 200 members come over. Much the same, we would suggest that the international offices may want to explore the pre-existing and continuing international involvement of Scotland organisations and see where they may be able to offer support or where activity may align with their own objectives and business plans.