



NEWS RELEASE

Historic Environment Advisory Council for Scotland

Announcement of Heritage Audit

The Historic Environment Advisory Council for Scotland (HEACS) welcomes the decision by Patricia Ferguson, Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport, to introduce a heritage audit.

The Minister's announcement follows the submission of a Report by HEACS which recommended the need for an audit and outlined a programme of action.

Liz Burns, chair of HEACS stated that *'We very much welcome the announcement by the Minister and are pleased that the strong and robust case we made has been recognised. A heritage audit will provide the necessary foundation for sound evidence-based policies. This is a major step forward for the support of the historic environment.'*

HEACS is convinced that, by instituting an audit process, the absence of fundamental data within the Historic Environment sector will be addressed, the human and financial resources which are available will be used more cost-effectively, and that decisions within the sector will become more co-ordinated, open and transparent.

HEACS anticipates that the audit process will become mainstreamed into heritage sector operations and looks forward to the production of an Annual Report on the State of the Scottish Historic Environment.

The chair concluded by stating that *'We welcome the Minister's support for our work. We look forward to working with Historic Scotland and other stakeholders in steering the audit project.'*

Notes to Editors

1. HEACS was established by Scottish Ministers in 2003 as an advisory Non-Departmental Public Body to provide informed and independent advice on issues affecting the historic environment, which includes structures and places of historical, archaeological and architectural interest. The Chair of the Council is Mrs Elizabeth Burns CMG OBE.
2. The need for a heritage audit was one of the matters which HEACS was charged with undertaking when it came into being in June 2003.
3. In preparing its report to the Minister recommending a heritage audit and process, HEACS heard evidence from a number of expert bodies and individuals, and also consulted widely. The report and recommendations on the need for a heritage audit in Scotland is available on the HEACS website under News www.heacs.org.uk
4. The Minister has commissioned Historic Scotland to coordinate the heritage audit which will include the production of a regular 'State of the Historic Environment Report.'

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