



9 Manor Place, Edinburgh, EH3 7DN  
Tel/fax: 0131 220 6241  
Email: [info@befs.org.uk](mailto:info@befs.org.uk)  
Website: [www.befs.org.uk](http://www.befs.org.uk)

Lucy Blackburn  
Director of Heritage Policy  
Historic Scotland  
Longmore House  
Salisbury Place  
Edinburgh  
EH9 1SH

16<sup>th</sup> March 2009

Dear Lucy

**BEFS response to HEACS report and recommendations on the infrastructure of the historic environment sector**

As you know, BEFS submitted a preliminary response to the report and recommendations made by HEACS on the infrastructure of the historic environment sector at the end of January. This is an exciting opportunity to further develop the work we have been engaged in over the past six years and following consultation with our members we now wish to propose the best way forward to address the very real concerns of HEACS, regarding both support for the historic environment sector, and gaps that will be created by its demise.

BEFS welcomes the recommendations in the HEACS Report, supports the description of the sector and is pleased that HEACS has recognised BEFS' work by recommending that we should be invited to develop a business plan as the intermediary body delivering bespoke services.

Since we met on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February to discuss our preliminary response we have carried out detailed consultation with our members. They represent the key non-governmental bodies that are active in the historic environment. I am pleased to say that there has been a remarkable consistency of view.

We look back on the decision by Historic Scotland to support BEFS' cross cutting strategic direction with core funding six years ago as visionary. This recent consultation demonstrated strong support for bespoke historic environment intermediary services to be delivered through BEFS. The consensus across our membership confirms that the strategic context of BEFS' cross cutting agenda continues to be as central to historic environment bodies now as it was then.

BEFS, with the full support of our members, is eager to develop a business plan that will provide us and Historic Scotland with a blueprint for delivering intermediary services at an enhanced level to the historic environment sector. As, given current core funding constraints, we have neither the staff nor financial resources to prepare such a business plan we would welcome funding

support from Historic Scotland as recommended in the HEACS Report. This would allow us to commission consultants to develop a strategy to address sector needs most efficiently. We envisage that this would be overseen by a BEFS steering group comprising Board, staff, sector representatives, SCVO and Historic Scotland.

BEFS can build on this exciting opportunity, and help create the ideal infrastructure for integrated and cost effective support to the historic environment sector, through the added value of our remit across the whole built environment. We are keen to work with Historic Scotland in pursuing this agenda. Also, we hope and expect that HEACS will give its support to the proposal, both as a corporate entity prior to its demise, and after its demise, through the energy of the individuals who have worked hard to promote the historic environment agenda through that body.

I hope that you will find that this letter provides a basis for Historic Scotland to support our proposal to develop a business plan. I have attached an annex that develops some points in this letter and may help provide a starting point for a business plan brief. I hope we can make an early start on developing such a brief and I look forward to an opportunity to discuss with you how it might be taken forward.

Yours sincerely



Robin Burley  
Chair  
Built Environment Forum Scotland

Enc: Annex

Cc: Michael Russell MSP, Minister for Culture, External Affairs and the Constitution

John Graham, Chief Executive, Historic Scotland

Elizabeth Burns CMG OBE, Chair, Historic Environment Advisory Council for Scotland

Raymond Young CBE, Chair, Architecture & Design Scotland

Jim Mackinnon, Director for the Built Environment, Directorate for the Built Environment

Ian Gilzean, Chief Architect, Architecture and Place Division