

Scotland's built environment....

The context for living

Built Environment Forum Scotland (BEFS) is a forum that brings together 25 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working within the built environment sector. Uniquely, the membership includes voluntary sector and professional bodies, and organisations with interests in both contemporary and historic places. BEFS helps shape policy and legislation, encourages debate, and supports all stakeholders involved in our places by sharing information and solutions.

Our members and subscribers are as follows:-

Members

Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland; Association of Preservation Trusts - Scottish Committee; Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland; Council for Scottish Archaeology; Garden History Society in Scotland; Historic Houses Association for Scotland; Institute of Field Archaeologists - Scottish Group; Institute of Historic Building Conservation - Scottish Branch; National Trust for Scotland; Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland; Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors in Scotland; Royal Town Planning Institute in Scotland; Saltire Society; SCAPE Trust; Scottish Civic Trust; Scottish Stone Liaison Group; Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.

Subscribers

ALGAO Scotland; Central Scotland Forest Trust; Edinburgh World Heritage; Glasgow Caledonian University - Heritage Futures; Homes for Scotland; Natural Stone Institute; Scottish Urban Archaeological Trust Ltd; Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings in Scotland.

For further information on BEFS, and for links to member websites, visit:

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September 2006



PRIDE OF PLACE

A MANIFESTO FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Our Ambitions for Scotland's Places...

Members of the Built Environment Forum Scotland seek a Scotland in which our enjoyment and use of the built environment is enhanced by successful place-making, combining the best of our historic and contemporary surroundings to benefit our economy, communities and the environment.

Places for Living...

We must work harder to create the places in which Scotland's people aspire to live and work and which enhance Scotland's image across the world. Our built environment is the vital backdrop to our daily lives. It is ever changing to meet our needs, but fragmented change can undermine long term heritage values, collective social and economic opportunities, and concerted attempts to reduce our carbon footprint. We must develop an understanding of the role of the built environment in developing sustainable communities.

A commitment to engagement, and quality of outcome, in how we make long term decisions about investment or conservation in the built environment will make our places safer, healthier, and more inclusive. It will foster identity and pride of place in communities, whilst attracting investment and tourism at the same time. In so doing we must especially promote distinctiveness and diversity and resist bland universality.

Aspirations..... Aspirations..... Aspirations..... . Aspirations.....

Quality places for people... our aspirations

- Scotland's places are distinctive and are beautiful; they inspire, enrich, evoke a sense of delight and make a fundamental contribution towards Scotland's cultural distinctiveness.
- In both materials and form, a Scottish style and indeed regional styles give a strong sense of locality, neighbourhood and identity.
- Processes of design and procurement are driven by quality and value as well as cost.
- Communities, built and historic environment professionals, politicians, clients, decision-makers - all engage effectively with design, planning and knowledge processes, to manage the pressures for development within the local area.

Sustainable places... our aspirations

- Our built environment and associated infrastructure are designed and operated for carbon neutrality. Current emissions are dramatically reduced through intervention and innovation that respect our existing fabric, while acknowledging the scale of the challenge and our responsibility to the global community.
- In the delivery of design, refurbishment and repair, a sustainable approach cultivates places that enable people to live in a sustainable, resource efficient way.
- Good sustainable design and methodology is firmly rooted in ancient principles of 'firmness, commodity and delight' and is therefore consistent with the intentions of the best of our historic fabric and future design.

Viable, functional places... our aspirations

- Management of landscape and townscape, the common-place to the iconic, is inter-disciplinary and integrated.
- New developments enhance rather than detract and are sensitive in terms of impact on existing surroundings.
- Coherent, long-term capital investment enables successful place-making and inward investment.
- Scotland's built environment; the physical expression and the skilled sector that supports it, is recognised as a valuable asset that is promoted abroad.

Integrated sector... our aspirations

- The built environment is firmly integrated into policy areas across government at all levels with clear political leadership.
- Built Environment policy is delivered effectively on the ground.
- The infrastructure of the built environment sector is strong, with organisations at all levels properly resourced, and working together to improve our surroundings.
- A creative and dynamic built environment sector is supported so that skilled professionals can achieve the quality places we deserve.

Aspirations..... Aspirations..... Aspirations..... . Aspirations.....

Actions.....Actions.....Actions.....Actions.....Actions.....Actions.....

Action on the Built Environment and Health

Poorly designed, poorly managed, poorly maintained environments impoverish communities and are inherently unsustainable. The high chemical content in many modern building materials, in combination with poor ventilation levels, are impacting on our nation's health, ability and productivity. We must focus efforts on promoting the links between the physical environment, health benefits and well-being.

Action on the Built Environment and Sustainable Development

We must promote higher density living and land-use diversity. Whole life costing must be mainstreamed, along with design for low carbon and longer life; design for reuse; for upgrade; and for deconstruction with minimal environmental impact. Embodied energy and resources must be valued in existing buildings and the supply and use of appropriate, locally sourced materials must be prioritised. Challenging and evidenced Sustainability Statements should be a standard requirement of the planning process. The above considerations should be recognised for their financial, social and environmental worth when assessing value and best value.

Action on Design Quality

We need stronger inter-disciplinary support for the Executive's statement on Designing Places and its Architecture Policy. Design Statements should be required in the procurement of all building or public realm projects. We need to examine the inhibitors to good design, and the processes that deliver good design. Design in the rural setting, and edge of settlement development, present particular challenges.

Action on the Historic Environment

We need to improve knowledge and understanding of the historic environment so that decisions on management and change are better informed, creating results that maximise benefit for residents and visitors alike. The ball is rolling with the establishment of the Audit of the Historic Environment – this good work must continue and expand. The appropriate provisions of the Planning, Ancient Monuments and Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas legislation require urgent amendment to improve efficiency and increase protection afforded to vulnerable sites.

Action on Town Centres and Urban Realm

Strategies are required for high quality, fully integrated management of neighbourhoods, town and city centres as the foci of community, business, cultural life and tourism. There is a need to bring together the varied interests responsible to achieve high quality outcomes that are valued by all users of urban spaces.

Action on Landscape

Landscape must be managed more holistically, with cultural landscape issues being treated with equal weight to natural environment issues. Responsibility for landscape management within the Executive needs to be strengthened and broadened. The principles of the European Landscape Convention must be promoted and widely implemented.

Action on Public Awareness, Lifelong Learning and Skills

Centres for Architecture and the Built Environment should be established as bases for training and awareness-raising for everyone. Cross-disciplinary training should be rolled out to enable greater joined up thinking and collaboration on projects. Locally held, accessible records on the historic environment should be made widely available to the public and professionals alike. Such actions, delivered locally, will help nurture local interest and a sense of ownership and responsibility towards the built environment.

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