

The National Performance Indicator for the Historic Environment Survey Summary Report

BEFS held a workshop in October 2014 on The Buildings at Risk Register: what next? primarily as an information gathering exercise. It looked at how the Buildings at Risk Register (BARR) operates, the BARR prioritisation methodology of Scottish Borders Council, explored challenges associated with its use and discussed its potential. The [report arising](#) from the workshop identified dissatisfaction with the percentage of A listed buildings on the BARR being the measure associated with the national performance indicator for the historic environment.

A review of the National Performance Framework (NPF), Scotland Performs, is taking place and the Measuring Success Working Group began looking at the National Performance Indicator (NPI) for the historic environment. The Historic Environment Operational Group, at its meeting in October 2015, endorsed BEFS work in relation to developing new Historic Environment National Performance Indicators and acknowledged the value in the Measuring Success Working Group taking this forward

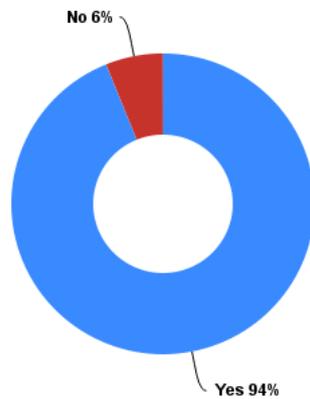
BEFS invited Jamie McFarlane from Scotland Performs to speak to the Historic Environment Working Group in November 2015 to provide the background to the NPF, explain how it is used and what the data requirements are for NPIS.

Following these events BEFS issued a survey on the NPI for the historic environment on 21st November 2015, emailing it directly to BEFS Members and Associate Members, and including it in BEFS eBulletin that reaches around 450 individual subscribers. The survey closed on 21st December 2015 with 49 responses, 12 of which were on behalf of organisations.

The following report summarises the responses and will provide the basis for an ongoing investigation into the historic environment NPI for the Measuring Success Working Group, Scottish Government and the heritage sector.

Q1 Do you think there should be a National Performance Indicator(s) specific to the historic environment?

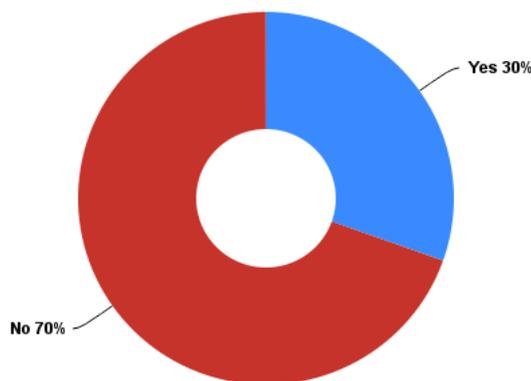
Answered: 49 Skipped: 0



94% of respondents agreed that there should be a NPI specific to the historic environment. The reasons provided ranged from the importance of this historic environment to Scotland’s cultural identity, placemaking, and wellbeing to its contribution to the national economy. It also maintains the profile of the historic environment in policy making and can help guide public funding: as one respondent put it “Indicators tend to be attended to: this is a way of ensuring government attention on the historic environment.”

Q2 If ‘yes’ to question 1, is the current indicator "improve the condition of Scotland's historic sites" satisfactory?

Answered: 46 Skipped: 3



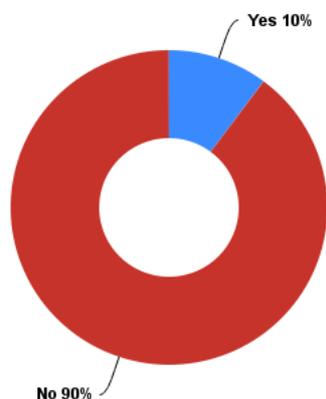
70% of respondents are dissatisfied with the current indicator “improve the condition of Scotland’s historic sites”. Criticisms vary from it being ‘too vague’ to being ‘too narrow’ and some misinterpret “historic sites” as meaning Properties in Care, one respondent suggesting “historic places” as an alternative. Maintaining rather than improving is suggested by some respondents as is sustainable management. Some criticise it for not encompassing the appreciation of, or understanding of, the historic environment. Only one alternative is

suggested: "Protect, preserve and improve the condition of our historic buildings, assets and sites". The majority of criticisms link to the measure which is more fully addressed in the next question.

Respondents that are satisfied with the indicator qualified their satisfaction stating that it should encompass the breadth of the historic environment as defined in Our Place in Time, one stating "As it stands the indicator does not capture the full range of effects that are of interest/relevance".

Q3 Is the current measure "percentage of A listed buildings on the BARR" satisfactory?

Answered: 49 Skipped: 0



90% of respondents are dissatisfied with the current measure be the "percentage of A listed buildings on the Buildings at Risk Register. The main reason provided is that A listed buildings are too small a subset of the historic environment and is therefore unrepresentative. It does not take into account battlefields, archaeology and designed gardens and landscapes or conservation areas. The demolition of an A listed building on the BARR would be a positive result for the NPI but a negative result for the historic environment. The report arising from BEFS BARR Workshop in 2014 is endorsed. One respondent also stated that it "Ignores the real issue and is a poor measure to show the wider social, economic and cultural impacts."

Of the 4 respondents that are satisfied with the current measure only 2 provided reasons why:

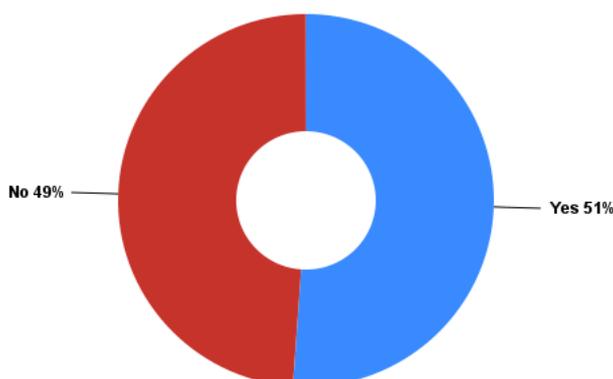
"Adequate because the emphasis is on conservation, responsible re-use - the messages the Government supports (I think?). There are plenty (too many?) targets which downgrade the value of the historic environment to a 'leisure pursuit' and fail to recognise that it is all around us, contributing to our well-being 24/7 not just high days and holidays. It is critical to underline the message and not give the impression that the historic environment is a luxury for our days off."

"The BARR lists buildings that need saving. "A" listed are naturally of most concern. But this only shows up the cherries. A great many other buildings would benefit from

the BARR, but this in turn means developing it to be more efficient as originally intended : to provide a resource for those interested in restoration as well as encouraging identification of adaption to sustainable usage.”

Q4 If 'No' to question 3, would the "percentage of extensive disrepair in pre 1919 buildings" (as collected by the Scottish House Condition Survey) be a satisfactory measure?

Answered: 45 Skipped: 4



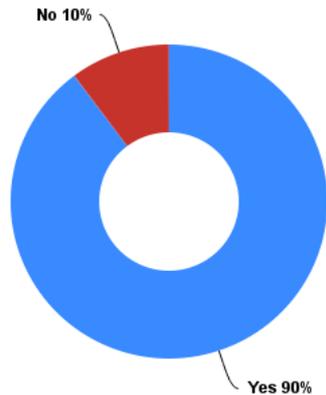
51% of respondents agreed that “percentage of extensive disrepair in pre-1919 buildings” was an improvement upon the existing measure although many with the caveat that it was still building focused and that post 1919 building are also important to the historic environment. As one respondent states:

“It would be a better measure (or part of a measure) as it would cover a wider range of buildings. However, it would still ignore archaeology, and other assets, and it would still be measuring something over which HES, and even the Scottish Government, has minimal influence.”

49% of respondents do not think it a satisfactory measure because it does not take into account battlefields, archaeology and designed gardens and landscapes, the broader definition of historic environment found in *Our Place in Time*. Most do acknowledge it as an improvement upon the existing measure as it is broader than A listed buildings. As one respondent states: “This could be helpful as one of a suite of measures, and I welcome that this would measure both designated and undesignated buildings.”

Q5 As 'Our Place in Time' is also about people's relationship with the historic environment should there be an additional indicator to reflect this? For example the natural environment has the indicator "increase people's use of the outdoors" in addition to an indicator on condition.

Answered: 49 Skipped: 0



90% of respondents support an indicator with a measure that reflected people's relationship with the historic environment. The most common reason for support is summed up by one respondent:

“In order to make the case for resources to protect the historic environment we continue to need to be able to demonstrate that people value and enjoy it. The historic built environment has the ability to enrich people's lives in many ways and this should be captured in some form in the indicators.”

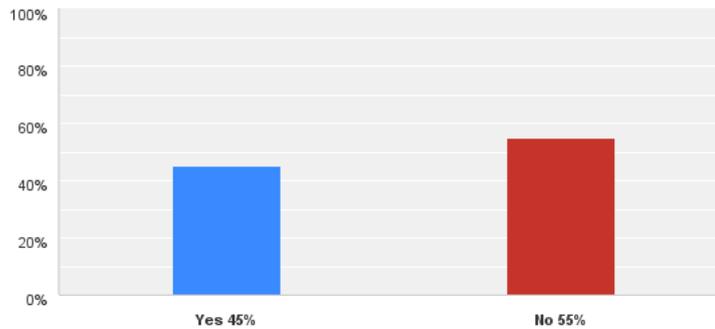
Respondents commonly made clear that their support for this as an indicator is in addition to one for condition. A number of suggestions were made:

- Increase awareness of, participation in and debate about the future of our historic environment
- Increase people's understanding and enjoyment of all aspects of the historic environment”
- Proportion of Scottish population visiting a historic place
- Number of school visits to a historic place undertaken as part of the Curriculum for Excellence
- Increase people's appreciation/understanding and engagement with the historic environment.

The 4 respondents that expanded on their lack of support for an engagement measure described it as “woolly” and “unquantifiable” with concern expressed that appreciation for historic towns or privately owned historic places would not be captured.

Q6 Would the "percentage of visits to a historic place - e.g. castle, stately home and grounds, battle or archaeological site" (as collected by the Scottish Household Survey) be a satisfactory measure for people's relationship with the historic environment?

Answered: 49 Skipped: 0



45% of respondents agreed that “percentage of visits to a historic place” would be a satisfactory measure for people reengagement with this historic environment. A number acknowledge support due to the data being already gathered but would like the definition of historic place to be widened, as this respondent states:

“But I think the definition of historic place should be broadened socially and culturally. The current definition is too narrow and heavily socially and culturally loaded. The definition needs to encompass conservation areas, social, cultural, industrial, agricultural, religious and recreational heritage, historic gardens and designed landscapes.”

55% of respondents do not support the measure describing it as too focused upon tourism and the “passive end of the relationship”. Many described it as a narrow definition of engagement, reinforcing a narrow definition of the historic environment that runs counter to Our Place in Time. There is a common misunderstanding of the dataset being visitor numbers as recorded by historic visitor attractions rather than responses to the Scottish Householder Survey. A number who do not support the measure acknowledge it moves in the right direction with some suggestions that would tweak the survey questions as in that quoted above.

This question revealed a statistical difference from anonymous respondents as 69% of anonymous respondents agreed that “percentage of visits to a historic place” would be a satisfactory measure for people reengagement with this historic environment.

Any other comments?

26 of the 49 respondents provided additional comments, primarily repeating support for a historic environment and supporting and additional one on engagement. A number also repeated the need to reflect the holistic nature of the historic environment. One respondent made a suggestion that would suggest a different approach to the historic environments representation in Scotland performs:

“The historic environment contributes to many core government targets. The more the owners of those other targets realise its substantial contribution, the more they too will wish engagement with its positive management (you would think). Health - 100% - physical and mental. Carbon targets - considerably. Housing - ready built, use it, Shelter tells how many vacant properties there are and considerable numbers are historic. The Indicators should be used to flag this holistic ownership and wider benefit.”

Responses were received from the following organisations:

Architectural Heritage Society for Scotland
Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
Forest Enterprise Scotland
Friends of Glasgow West
Heritage Lottery Fund
Scotland's Landscapes & Garden Heritage
Scotland's Towns Partnership
Scottish Civic Trust
Scottish Empty Homes Partnership
Society of Antiquaries of Scotland
Council on Training in Architectural Conservation

Individual responses were made by an employee of the National Trust for Scotland, an anonymous member of the Historic Houses Association, a member of the Institute for Historic Building Conservation and 3 employees of Historic Environment Scotland, 2 of whom are anonymous.

There are 16 anonymous individual responses and the only question where they responded differently as a group was to Q6.

34 respondents (70%) asked to be included in any further discussion.

SUGGESTED INDICATORS AND MEASURES

INDICATOR
monitor/improve the condition of Scotland's historic environment and its contribution to all aspects of the NPF
Protect, preserve and improve the condition of our historic buildings, assets and sites
CONDITION MEASURE ALTERNATIVES
For Performance it is better to count the number of listed buildings of all categories in the BARR that are removed from the register each year, discriminating between removal by demolition (bad) from removal because no longer at risk (good), so that there is no disincentive to going out to find more problems that can be resolved in future.
Numbers of buildings without plastic (toxic waste in other countries) windows, a simple measure.
number of designated historic assets currently receiving direct grant assistance (ie a defined management agreement or grant from HES / SGRPID) or within sustainable conservation management (ie by government agency / accredited land manager)" Data would include Properties in Care, National Forest Estate, Local Authority care, NTS etc (where a defined land management plan includes the individual designated historic asset) and include numbers of designated historic assets receiving positive defined conservation management within agri-environment schemes / HES grant schemes / Archaeology Scotland's Adopt-a-Monument scheme etc. included within an agreed land management plan
Perhaps the percentage of LBC applications determined within the statutory time period might be another one but could lead to "never mind the quality...". Percentage of LBC / CAC appeals determined on time by the DPEA would also be an interesting figure to see.
PARTICIPATION MEASURE
how people interact with ancient buildings
See the RSA index which uses 100 indicators, for more active participation than just making a visit, e.g. : volunteering awards Doors Open Days / Archaeology Month- events and participants
Increase people's appreciation/understanding and engagement with the historic environment.
Increase awareness of, participation in and debate about the future of our historic environment
Improve the maintenance and management of historic parks, gardens and landscapes
Increase community engagement with the protection of the historic environment.
Increase people's use of the historic environment Information on voluntary activities relating to the historic environment Education based indicator? Measure of skilled trades people?
Some surveyed measure of public attitudes towards the historic environment, showing increases in the extent to which it is valued
Increase people's understanding and awareness of architecture, materials and craftsmanship
Web site hits? borrowing of history/guide books from libraries?
Increase people's engagement with the historic environment
Increase educational visits to the historic environment
Increase peoples understanding of the cultural heritage of a site
Increase the number of heritage sites people visit each year
Increase people's understanding and enjoyment of all aspects of the historic environment'
proportion of Scottish population visiting a historic place
Number of school visits to a historic place undertaken as part of the Curriculum for Excellence
Increase people's engagement with the historic environment.
It might be worthwhile considering the factors that are measured and published in the annual 'Heritage Counts' reports
It is difficult to record this data]would be easier to measure how people rate these sites /experinces using a review system similar to trip advisor
Site surveys of parks and greenspaces to monitor use (not all but revolving occasional survey)? Or question about visits to local parks and gardens in Scottish household survey?

Increase the percentage of visits
Activity based and learning based actions should also be included e.g. traditional skills, apprenticeships, schools programmes, volunteering, higher education and research.
Could we measure the amount of people live in historic buildings or the number of business, community groups or other that operate within a historic building? Are these types of buildings only to be looked at or should they be an integral part of the life of the community?
Suggest that standardised data is collected from teachers as a result of a visit via Heritage Education Forum members and promoted to schools via the Curriculum for Excellence.
ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS
Measures need to reflect broad public interest & a the range of engagement mediums
It would be very useful/essential to research the true/overall economic benefits of a good historic environment.
Creation of Local Lists and numbers of accessions?
It would be good to have an indicator about key systems, such as number of local authorities with access to an HER/SMR and advice from a professional/accredited archaeologist and conservation officer
Levels of coverage/activity in Scotland by building preservation trusts could also be assessed to indicate where active communities are engaging with their local historic environment.
Perhaps we should be looking at the built environment and prioritising what is important to us - the listing system is one method, but it still doesn't give any indication of which category A listed buildings must be saved at all cost, and why. Or indeed whether any of the B listed buildings should be saved before an A listed building because of where it is - i.e. a category B listed building derelict and redundant within a local community is much more vulnerable and detrimental to that community than a category A listed doocot in the middle of a field.