

REPORT: HESPS Review Workshop

15th March 2018



Introduction

BEFS was looking to maximise the value for all attending the event, so asked attendees to do a little advance homework. This included making sure they were already familiar with the [Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement](#) (HESPS) 2016 but also the relevant section from Scottish Planning Policy 2016. These were to be read against the backdrop of *Our Place in Time* (OPiT) [Performance Report](#), and the analysis report on *What's Your Heritage* (WYH). It was also worth attendees bearing in mind the proposal within the Planning (Scotland) Bill to incorporate Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) into the National Planning Framework which would result in historic environment policy within SPP having a statutory status.

The structure of the day was to examine in some depth each of the three sections of HESPS – these were seen as **VISION**, **DESIGNATION** and **MANAGEMENT** – with each small group taking time to discuss the items/areas within each section where they would **ADD**, **CHANGE** or **DELETE** information.

Rather than the results of these exercises being whittled down during the workshop, and priorities being scoped with the room, BEFS chose to ask attendees to list *everything* within each of the categories – retaining this data enabled strength of feeling on any particular topic/area to be noted through repeat responses; this process helped to inform suggested areas for prioritisation.

The event was well attended with 27 organisations represented from across the sector and 42 attendees participating in the day. Evaluation saw 100% of respondents **agreeing** with the statement: *This event has enabled me to actively engage in the future of heritage policy.*

The information gathered on the day has been precisely (where possible) transcribed and is presented via [a table](#) - this should be referred to for multiple specific suggestions in relation to the current HESPS text.

This narrative is to highlight and summarise key changes, and challenges, suggested by attendees throughout the day. For clarity, the current policy document is referred to as HESPS throughout, other title suggestions have been made by attendees.

Vision

There was general agreement that the focus of a revised HESPS should be the *Vision*.

The attendees were keen to gain further clarity on the **target audience** for the document, and whether HESPS is intended to be about **setting policy, or advising on policy**.

To clarify the current audience for HESPS the attendees were asked for a show of hands for those who regularly used/referred to HESPS. Those who did engage were directly involved with the statutory planning process from a Local Authority or private sector perspective.



Clearer information was also requested on the **relationship between other government policy areas** and HESPS – such as natural, forestry, agriculture, planning policies etc.

The role of key partners (including LAs, Private owners and Agencies) should also be detailed within the vision.

The Vision – or aims for the historic environment/heritage/cultural heritage (this too needed a definition that was more inclusive) - should be **overarching**. Clear cross-references should be provided to other documents (OPiT, SPP, WYH etc) where necessary.

The **language used should be far simpler**, with a glossary provided. The language should also be active, not passive. (Language considered as too fussy/complex applied to all of HESPS.)

There should be **less detail** overall, and clear subheadings should guide the reader. The content of HESPS, and the Vision in particular, was viewed as too wordy and repetitive: condense, combine, and be concise.

Suggested **additions to the Vision** included more explicit references to:

- Stewardship
- Placemaking
- Living use of heritage assets, who benefits *now*
- Diversity/Inclusivity
- Intangible Heritage
- Sustainability (in relation to Sustainable Development Goals, not purely economic sustainability)
- World Heritage Sites

Throughout the event mention was made to **adequate resourcing**, with support for funding and resourcing information seen as a helpful addition to the document.

Whilst a clearly defined Vision was supported by all, many saw it as only of direct use to the sector when linked to appropriate Actions.

Designation

This was a section of HESPS where many questions arose from the attendees (see Excel for details). It was suggested that a policy document was **not the place for detailed criteria in relation to designation**.

However, the **principle and purpose of designation** could rightly be found within a future HESPS document.

When considering **Designation Principles** there was a wish to include:

- Definitions of terminology
- Celebration of designation as an asset, not a hindrance
- A people centred approach which also takes account of the context of an asset

- Power to review designations, so as not to reach ‘scheduling saturation’
- Public Interest/Community Interest to be embedded within designation – whilst noting the caveat that public interest can be transitory in a way that building fabric may not, and how to establish/balance these principles effectively
- Future implications of listing, including higher costs and restrictions to change, leading to potential deterioration
- Principle of ‘change management’ to be front and centre, this is not about ‘no change’
- Designation to be integrated/aligned to related policies, such as those around sustainability, climate change, social and economic imbalances
- Definition of ‘value’ in relation to designation

When considering designation practicalities and designation management the following points were noted (for a future, separate document):

- Addition of principles of designation/advice in relation to new materials/construction techniques and their longevity
- Clear structure for who deals with designated sites on a day-to-day basis, rather than extended information on who does the designating
- Listed building entries are not always clear on what is listed
- The document on designation should be far more interactive – and interspersed with infographics and flow-charts
- ‘Listing’ to be a unified term for all designations
- Clarification around World Heritage Sites
- Ability to alter/correct designation documentation more easily

Management

Similar issues arose around this section, as with Designation. It was suggested that a policy document was **not the place for detailed criteria in relation to HES management**, with much of this section being seen as more suited to a separate document rather than HESPS.

However, the **principle and purpose of heritage management** could rightly be found within a future HESPS document.

These principles should include:

- Why we manage heritage.
- Principles of pro-active v. reactive management
- Explanation of the wide variety of players within the sector (current document written as HES, not as lead body), setting out relationships and responsibilities, with clarity of role and clearly defined language (a recurring theme throughout the review process)
- Principles in relation to managing change

- Align policy and people – respect for implementation, determination, skills and expertise
- Planning for the future – policy to include plan for interdisciplinary individuals who manage heritage within a wider context
- Emphasis on the growing importance of digital tools (and the necessary resource and investment)
- Forming guidance in consultation/collaboration with planning, transport, infrastructure actors

When considering more technical aspects of heritage management there was desire for future guidelines to:

- Remove Ecclesiastic Exemption
- Clarify the difference between certain heritage consents, use worked examples to demonstrate what is possible
- Demonstrate pathways for greater return on investment
- Clarify role and purpose of World Heritage Site Management Plans

A new chapter was recommend on **enabling action** in public, voluntary and private sectors. This would cover grants, advice, partnership, Listing and regeneration strategies. This may be more well-suited to a separate advice document, but the principles of enabling, rather than preventing were seen as important to encouraging greater dialogue between communities and actors within the sector.

Seeing the section on Management as it relates to Action, which in turn helps to deliver Vision could provide a great deal of clarity for both a future HESPS, and the sector. A strong, ambitious Vision will be championed if: it is a Vision co-produced with the sector, which encourages, enables and includes multiple actors. ‘Principles of Management’ which help to turn the Vision into Actions - through interaction with other agencies, authorities and individuals - will help to ensure a sustainable future for all our heritage.

Supporting publications which show Designation and Heritage Management technicalities set-out in flow charts, with graphics and case studies, will provide more user-friendly and engaging information. This makes it easier for the right people to ask the right questions – and find the best solutions to preserve our past, and secure a flourishing future.

Appendix

Organisations represented

Aberdeen City Council
ALGAO:UK
Angus Council
AOC Archaeology Group
Building Learning
Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
Cockburn Association
Craigerne Consulting Limited
East Lothian Council
Heriot Watt University
Historic Environment Scotland
RSA Fellows' Borders & MCICH Networks
ICE Scotland
INHERIT
Lichfields
New Lanark Trust
Royal Town Planning Institute
Scott Hobbs Planning
Scottish Borders Council
Scottish Government
Scottish Industrial Heritage Society
Scottish Land & Estates
Simpson & Brown
Society of Antiquaries of Scotland
The National Trust for Scotland
University of Edinburgh
University of Glasgow