

BEFS

BUILT ENVIRONMENT
FORUM SCOTLAND

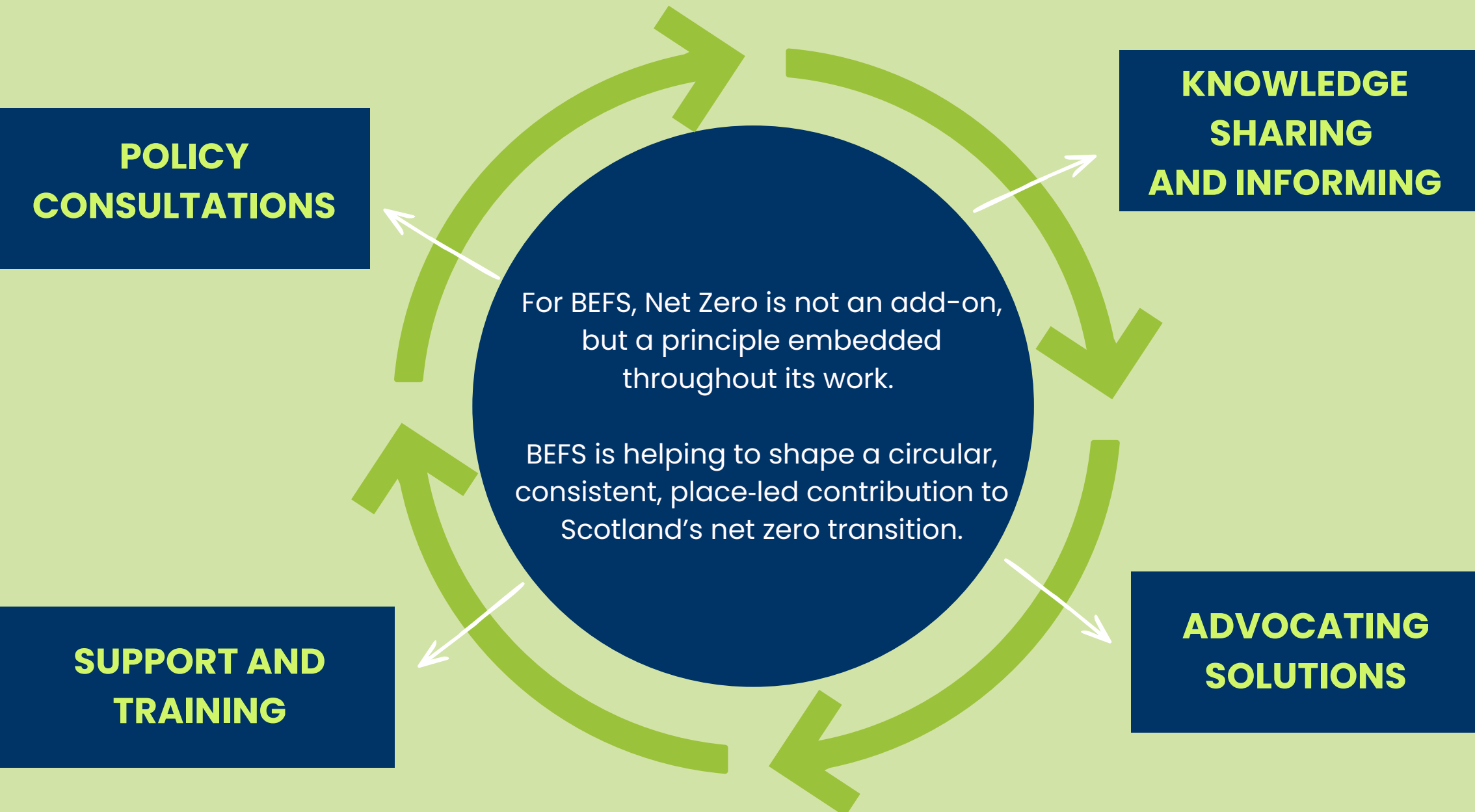
NET ZERO ACTIVITY

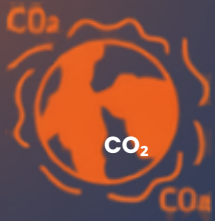
Built Environment Forum Scotland



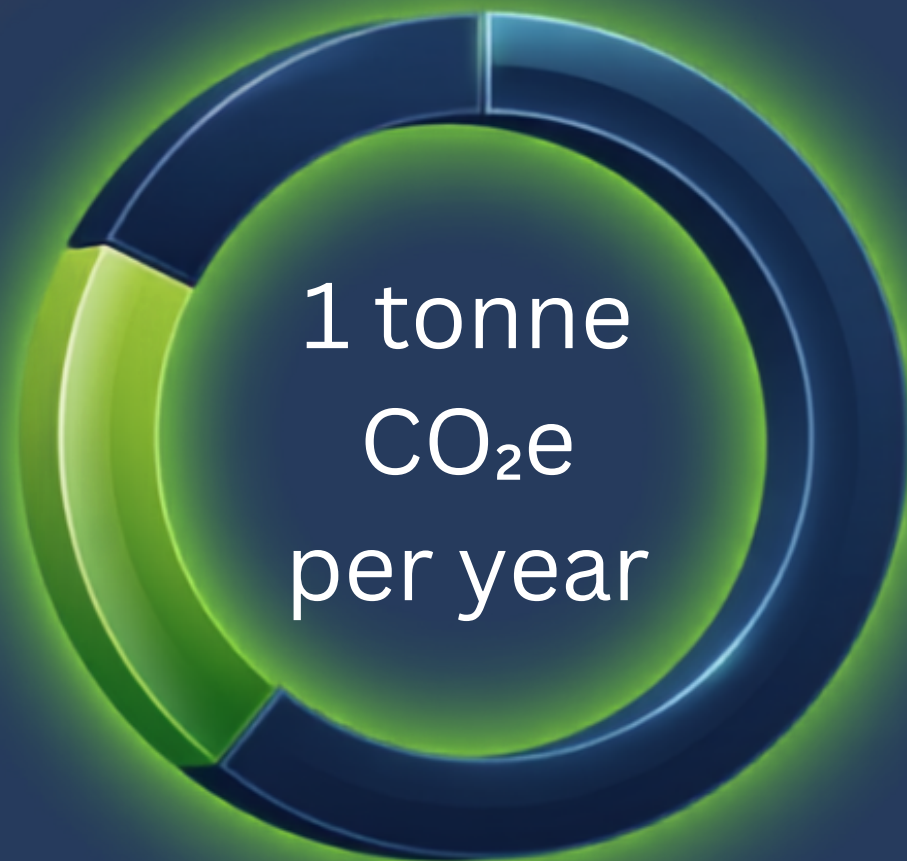
What does Net Zero look like for BEFS?

Circular, whole-system approach





BEFS Carbon Footprint



Based on staff travel and IT equipment, BEFS' operational carbon footprint is around **1 tonne of CO₂e per year**, reflecting a small, home-based team and very limited travel.

Work from Home carbon analysing and recording from seeding earth



travel



IT equipment



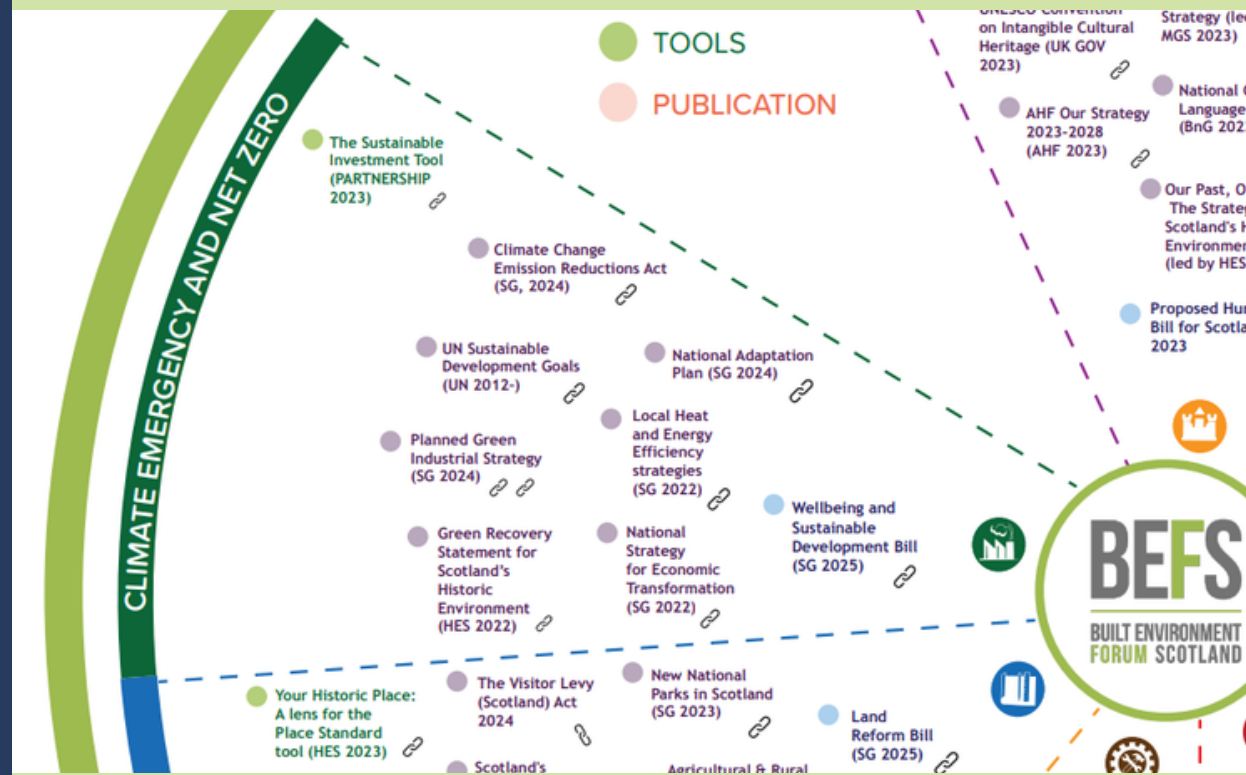
digital emissions

BEFS MANIFESTO 2025/2026

Priority 02: Climate Emergency and Net Zero

The Net Zero priority in the BEFS Manifesto calls for Scotland's transition to be led by the reuse, repair and retention of existing buildings. This recognises that the country cannot meet its climate goals without valuing the embodied carbon already stored in its built environment.

It argues for whole-life carbon thinking, stronger support for maintenance and adaptation, and investment in the traditional and green skills needed to deliver a fair and place-based transition. This priority positions heritage as a core climate solution rather than a separate concern.



BEFS policy consultations relating to the climate emergency and net zero.

BEFS STRATEGIC ACTIVITY

BEFS strategic oversight prioritises promoting and conserving the built environment in Scotland, while focusing on the issues that matter most to our members. BEFS' work aligns with Scotland's national policy and planning frameworks as well as HES' National Strategy, ensuring that activity across the sector is grounded in current priorities and legislative direction.

BEFS PRIORITIES



CULTURE AND HERITAGE



PLANNING AND PLACEMAKING



REPAIR, MAINTENANCE AND RETROFIT



TRAINING AND SKILLS



MEMBERS AND ENGAGEMENT



BEFS facilitates shared learning and best practice, with strategic oversight to prioritise preserving our historic environment. There is progress happening in many organisations involved in these groups in regards to Net Zero and the climate emergency.





POLICY AND ADVOCACY

30+ Policy Consultations to Net Zero legislation

BEFS 2026 Policy Manifesto

Committee and cross-party group participation

Advocating for our manifesto priorities with joint letters, campaigns and engagement

Cross-sector coordination and involvement from our members

Advocating for a sustainable future for the built environment

BEFS Policy team works hard to respond to all relevant policy consultations, including many that contribute to Net Zero and the climate emergency. There have been 30+ pieces of legislation responded to in the last parliamentary session that have involved energy efficiency, climate change, circular economy and more related topics to Net Zero. These can be seen on BEFS website.

BEFS advocates through meetings with MSPS/Ministers, and works across the sector and the Parliament to ensure transparency and fairness. BEFS developed an advocacy toolkit to share best practice throughout the sector to assist groups with advocating for the built and traditional environment.



BULLETIN AND PUBLICATIONS

13 MAY 2026

BEFS Bulletin 397: Election news, traditional materials and re-use

Get The Latest Built Environment News, Policy Developments, Publications & Consultations



BEFS NEWS

The big news this bulletin is the result of last week's elections. Derek Rankine, BEFS Head of Policy and Strategy, provides his take on what may come:

"Getting more champions in Holyrood who really care about historic buildings and understand the built environment." Talking at the BEFS hustings event in Edinburgh, Sam Gallacher of Scottish



6 MAY

POWF Newsletter - An Overview of Churches Sold in Shetland and Aberdeen

In This Edition Of The POWF Newsletter, Louise Paterson - Churches Programme Officer With Community Ownership Support Service (COSS) - Shares A Review Of The Journeys Of Churches Sold In Shetland And Aberdeen, And What We Might Expect In Other Areas Of Scotland Where Church Sales Are Only Just Beginning.



20 APR

2026 Election: Built Environment Commitments in Party Manifestos

What Built Environment Commitments Are The Main Parties Making In The Run-Up To Next Month's Scottish Parliament Elections?

The BEFS Bulletin offers wider sector news, contacts, job postings and events that relate to traditional skills, green skills, retrofitting, heritage, and many other aspects of the transition to Net Zero within the sector and beyond. As BEFS net zero progress continues, this will be published widely across channels for the sector to inform and share best practice. The Bulletin audience has reached 1,091 as of July 2026, and the average opening rate is nearly 45%.

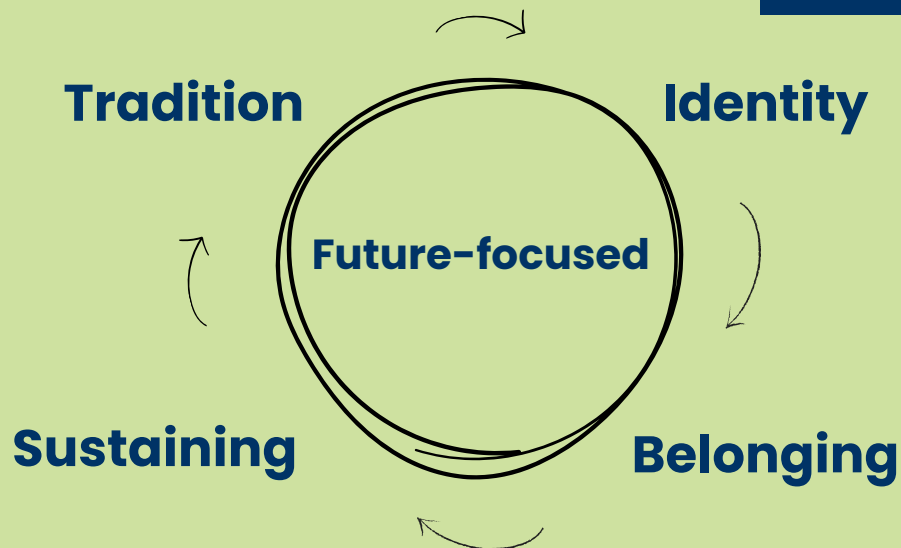


HERITAGE AND CULTURE



Culture and Heritage are at the foundation of BEFS work. Scotland's heritage and culture sit at the core of BEFS' purpose, yet they operate as distinct but complementary spheres. This dual focus is essential for Scotland's transition to Net Zero. Heritage and culture are not only assets to protect, they are active contributors to a low-carbon future.

By embedding climate considerations across heritage and cultural policy, BEFS helps ensure that Scotland's past is safeguarded through a future-focused approach, one where protecting identity and place goes hand in hand with meeting national climate goals.

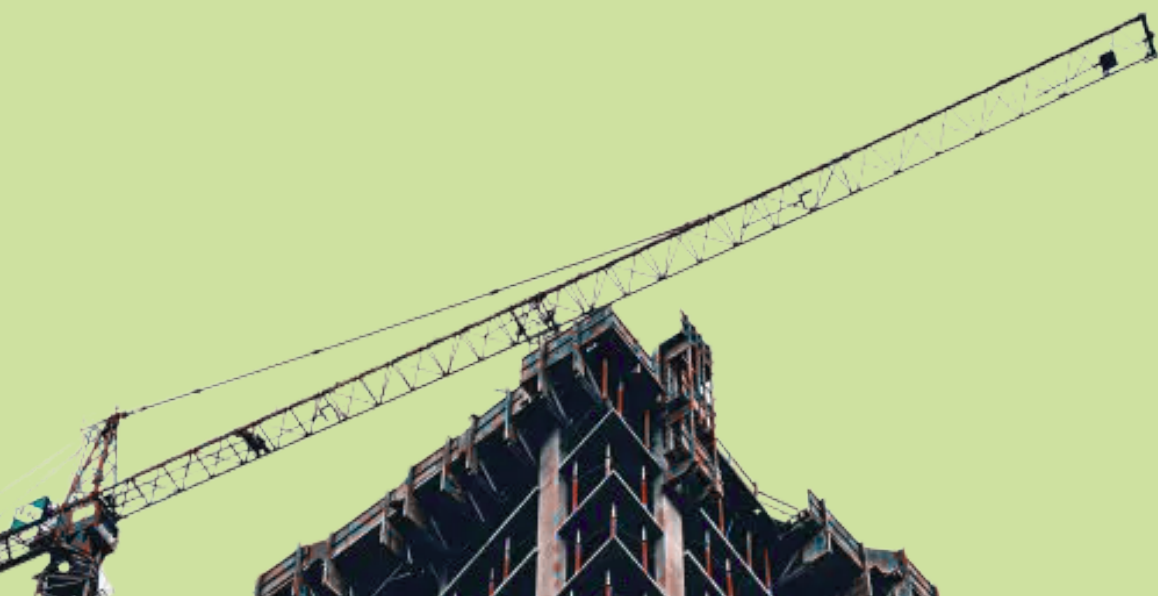




REPAIR, MAINTENANCE AND RETROFIT

Repair, Maintenance and Retrofit have a significant role to play in achieving net zero emissions by 2045

BEFS work makes the connection between Net Zero and building condition. Better information on building condition, including fabric ratings, will help owners make informed energy efficiency decisions. We actively advocate for a fabric-first approach to repair, maintenance and retrofit, alongside EPC reform and policy within guidance or legislation that support regular maintenance and improved building performance.



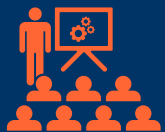
- **Reduce energy demand to save energy and carbon.**
- **Enhance building performance to improve comfort and health.**
- **Decarbonise heating and energy systems.**
- **Reimagine and reuse buildings rather than demolishing them.**



PLANNING AND PLACEMAKING

BEFS and its Members **focus on planning and placemaking at the centre of their work**, recognising that how we shape and care for Scotland's places directly influences the country's progress toward Net Zero. In BEFS Manifesto, it advocates for embedding Net Zero and wellbeing targets into the planning system. In the Place Based Exchange group, discussions highlight the need for urgent, coherent national policy change to empower local authorities to deliver Scotland's transition to Net Zero.





TRAINING AND SKILLS



BEFS works across the sector to highlight the importance of the knowledge, training and skills needed to deliver Net Zero for Scotland's historic environment. **There is growing demand for both traditional craft and green skills across construction, conservation, retrofit, planning and heritage management.** BEFS advocates for investment in skills development, supporting Historic Environment Scotland's Skills Investment Plan, as essential to address capacity gaps, support knowledge transfer, and equip the workforce to meet future climate and place-based challenges. Strengthening skills provision will help safeguard Scotland's built heritage while supporting local economies, community wellbeing and Net Zero ambitions.





MEMBERS AND ENGAGEMENT

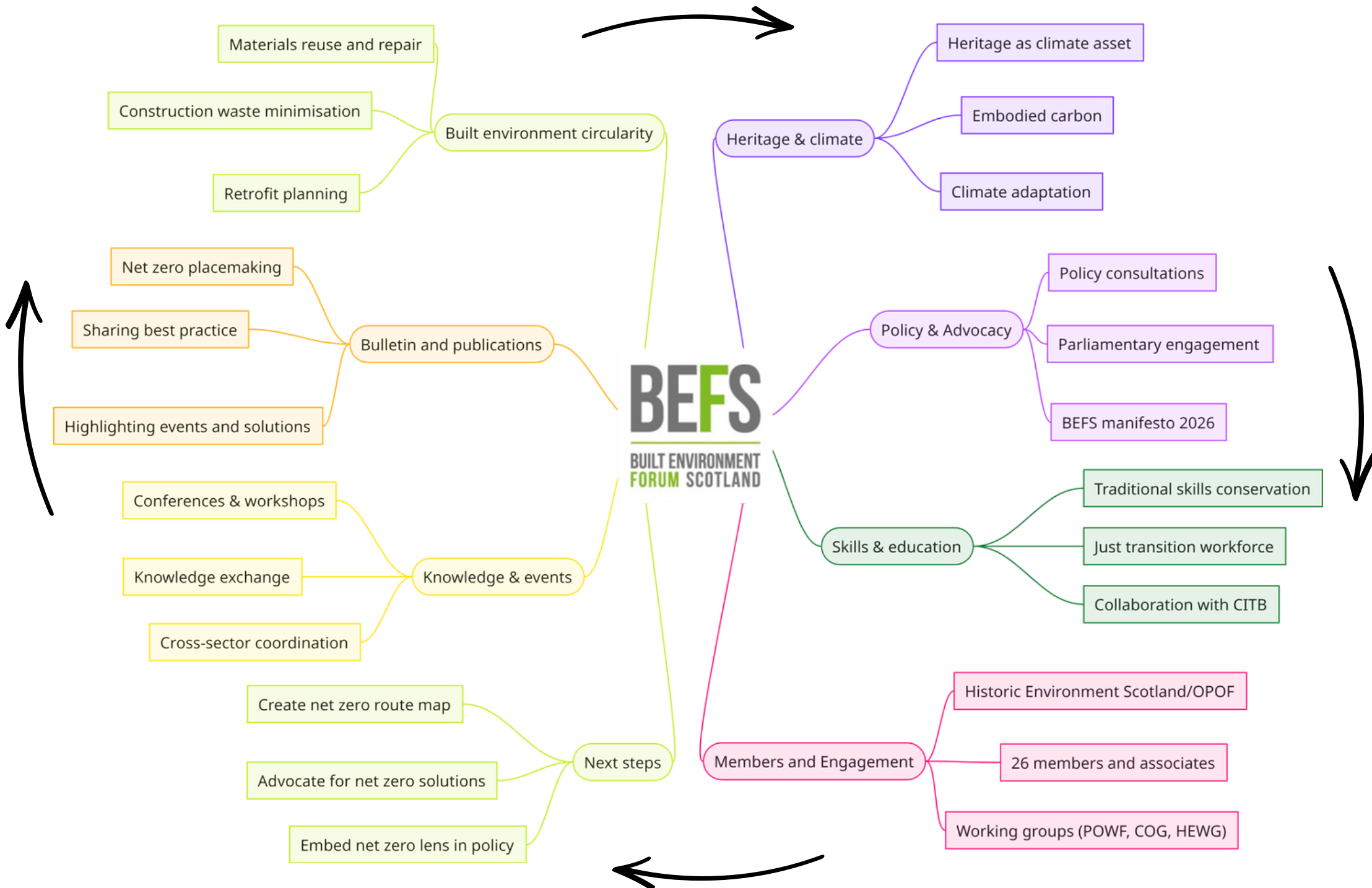
BEFS has 26 Members and 15 Associate Members



BEFS Members, Associate Members, Board, and Trustees are central to the organisation's daily work. While most member organisations focus primarily on the built environment, architecture, and heritage, and only a small number have dedicated climate or Net Zero staff, their missions increasingly converge around the need for sustainable approaches to Scotland's traditional buildings and places.

BEFS is strengthening its commitment and focus on Net Zero and the climate emergency with Member discussions.

BEFS CLIMATE/NET ZERO ACTIVITY MAPPING - AT A GLANCE



How can we de-mystify Net Zero and successfully leverage the value of the existing and historic built environment towards our national targets?

