



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Why are we creating a new body for the historic environment?**

The coming together of RCAHMS and Historic Scotland will provide a sustainable way to safeguard the skills, knowledge, expertise and experience of both bodies.

It also presents a real opportunity to raise the profile and impact of the historic environment sector. The new Historic Environment Scotland (HES) lead body will deliver real public benefit for Scotland, ensuring people can continue to understand, value and enjoy our historic environment, now and in future years.

### **How will the new organisation be different from what we currently have?**

The preferred model for the new organisation is a Non Departmental Public Body (NDPB) which will be expected to apply for charitable status. This would give it a greater degree of independence than executive agencies in how it operates and bring it closer in line with sector partners including the National Library; Galleries and Museums of Scotland; Creative Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage - all of whom are NDPBs.

### **What is the thinking behind seeking charitable status for the new body?**

Charitable status will be sought for the new body to recognise the public benefit derived from its work.

### **When will the new joint organisation start work?**

The new body will be established in a two stage approach as follows:

- *1 April 2015: corporate body established and Board appointed*
- *1 October 2015: transfer of operational powers to the new body which will include the transfer of staff and assets*

This two stage approach is informed by best practice guidance from the Public Service Reform Bill (2010) and will help ensure a smooth operational transition to HES. The six month period between these two stages will allow the Board to establish a clear and strong vision for the new organisation (as per Audit Scotland guidance).

### **What about the current functions of both organisations?**

All of the current functions of RCAHMS and Historic Scotland will transfer into HES. The Cabinet Secretary has made clear that security of employment and retention of skills and expertise are key criteria for the new body to deliver on.

### **How will the two organisations work together in the run up to the creation of the new body?**

The two organisations have been working closely on the development of a programme for transition to the new body which includes projects to integrate key infrastructure functions such as HR, IT, finance, libraries and communications. Staff from both organisations are also involved in designing and delivering key strategic projects such as the creation of a new corporate plan and business model.



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## **What impact will this all have on current aspects such as staff terms and conditions, pension arrangements etc?**

There will be no detrimental impact on the terms, conditions or pension arrangements of staff in either of the current organisations – the recent pay deal sought to harmonise pay and conditions across both ahead of the new body starting work. As part of the move to the new body, both organisations have worked closely with the unions to support staff through the process.

## **What does the current Historic Environment Scotland Bill do?**

It provides for the creation of HES as the new lead body for the historic environment which will play a key role in delivering the first ever Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland – *Our Place in Time*.

## **Why do we need a Bill to create the new organisation? Can't it happen without legislation?**

It could, however, the legislation means HES will have its purpose and functions clearly defined in statute. This will help to focus and sustain existing work on investigating, recording, caring, protecting and celebrating our historic environment. The legislation will ensure that the regulation of the historic environment in Scotland is consistent, proportionate and effective and aligns with the rest of the planning system.

## **What is the Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland?**

*Our Place in Time*, The Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland, provides the vision and desired outcomes for the historic environment. It sets out a clear direction, detailing how our historic environment will be carefully managed to deliver real and increasing benefits to Scotland's people during the next ten years. It will support all parts of the historic environment sector to work together to enable the sector to reach its full potential. As Scotland's first-ever Historic Environment Strategy, it will ensure our diverse historic environment is understood, valued, enjoyed and enhanced now and for future generations.

## **What is the connection between the Historic Environment Strategy and the new organisation?**

The work of the new organisation will take its lead from the strategy and will play a lead role in supporting and enabling its implementation. A corporate plan is being drafted for consideration by the incoming Board and this will provide the necessary link between the strategy and work of the new body.

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