

## SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



### **Jim Mackinnon, Chief Planner and Director for the Built Environment, Scottish Government**

Jim Mackinnon was born in Forres in 1952 and educated at Forres Academy. He graduated with a First Class Honours Degree in Geography in 1974 followed by a Diploma in Town Planning with Distinction from the University of Strathclyde in 1977.

He joined the former Scottish Office from Motherwell District Council in 1979 and has held a wide variety of posts and responsibilities in planning. He was a member of the UK delegation to the Committee on Spatial Development and was appointed as an expert advisor on the National Spatial Strategy for Ireland.

Following a year as Head of Planning Division in the Scottish Executive he was appointed Chief Planner and Head of Planning and Building Standards Group in November 2000 where he has led the reform of the planning system which includes the Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006, the National Planning Framework and a range of measures to promote culture change in planning. In January 2008 he became Director for the Built Environment with responsibility for architecture and place making, building standards and planning.

He is a member of the Royal Town Planning Institute and in November 2008 was made an Honorary Member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors.



### **Malcolm Cooper, Chief Inspector, Historic Scotland**

Malcolm Cooper is the Chief Inspector and one of the executive directors of Historic Scotland, an Agency of the Scottish Government. He runs the Inspectorate comprising of around 120 staff with a broad range of responsibilities relating to the designation and protection of Scotland's historic environment.

At the outset of his career he worked as a field archaeologist for Birmingham University and for Hereford and Worcester Council. He was County Archaeological Officer for Hereford and Worcester for 4 years running both an archaeological field unit and an advisory service before joining English Heritage in 1993 as an Inspector of Ancient Monuments. During his 13 years there held a number of

posts including Deputy Director of their London region (responsible for their wide-ranging historic property portfolio), Director of their North West regional office and Territory Director for the North of England. He moved to Historic Scotland in 2005. Malcolm holds a degree in ancient history and archaeology at the University of Birmingham, a masters degree in computer application in archaeology and a postgraduate diploma in Management Studies. He is a member of the Chartered Institute of Management and the Institute of Field Archaeologists, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, Commerce and Manufactures, a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London and a Fellow and Council Member of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. He is also an honorary research fellow at the University of Edinburgh.



### **Alistair MacDonald, Head of Planning, Glasgow City Council**

Alistair graduated in 1977 with a BSc (Hons) Geography with Geology from the University of Strathclyde. This was followed by a Diploma in Urban and Regional Planning in 1982 - University of Strathclyde. He is also a member of RTPI 1983.

Alistair joined Glasgow City Council in 1977 and the Department of Planning in 1979. He has extensive experience working within the Planning System in Glasgow, covering various areas of the city and has held managerial posts in the city since 1995.

He is currently the Head of Planning at Glasgow City Council.

A member of the Executive of the Heads of Planning Scotland and the Society's Sub-Committee on Management Practice, Alistair is also a visiting Professor at the School of Architecture and Urban Design at the University of Strathclyde. He was a member of a European Network involving 12 cities, exchanging information and experiences on urban regeneration and deprived communities between 2004 and 2006. Between 2005 and 2007, Alistair took up the position of chair of the Culture Commission which is part of the Lighting Urban Communities Network based in Lyon and chaired meetings in Leipzig, Eindhoven, Shanghai and Glasgow.

His work experience in Glasgow has covered various projects in the City Centre and River Clyde with more specific projects linked to the Lighting Strategy - Radiance Lighting Festival, and local history and archaeology, a cross cutting group in the Council, bringing together different services. Alistair also chairs the Glasgow Urban Design Panel.



**Ruth Parsons, Interim Chief Executive,  
Historic Scotland**

Ruth took up post as interim Chief Executive of Historic Scotland in October this year. Prior to this posting, Ruth was the Director of Local Government, the Third Sector and Public Service reform in Scottish Government. Working closely with Ministers, Ruth's Directorate led on the delivery of the Concordat between the Scottish Government and Local Government, the introduction of Single Outcome Agreements and the development of a new relationship with the Third Sector. Before joining the Scottish Government in 2005, Ruth enjoyed a 21 year career with HM Customs and Excise, now HMRC.

Ruth has extensive experience in driving strategic change programmes and delivering significant service delivery improvements. This experience has built throughout her career which has involved managing operational teams of 30 people to 3000 people across different parts of government and building relationships with key partners and stakeholders.

Ruth has also worked with Cabinet Office supporting the Civil Service Reform Agenda and a programme led by Sir Gus O'Donnell about Improving Leadership Capacity in the Senior Civil Service.

Ruth is a Fifer, born and brought up in the historic capital of Scotland, Dunfermline. She and her son David have spent many happy hours enjoying historic sites across Scotland. Her other interests include football, travelling and reading.