

## **HISTORIC SCOTLAND BOARD**

**13 DECEMBER 2007, EDINBURGH**

### **ITEM 11: FORWARD LOOK - POSSIBLE HSB TOURS FOR 2008/09**

We discussed possible 2008/09 meeting locations at our October meeting. We now need to agree which visits to arrange and when. Our suggestions are as follows.

#### February 2008

- Dumfries House: ownership has now transferred and we should see what we have bought and perhaps discuss associated marketing and development issues with other funders, the new Trust and the Local Authority.

#### June 2008

- Perthshire and Stanley Mills: on the assumption that SM will open around Easter, this would be a good time to visit. The visit would also aim to take in some casework in Perthshire.

#### October 2008

- Antonine wall: on the assumption that July's UNESCO decision goes in our favour, this would be a good time to tap into local enthusiasm and test the wider vision and management planning for the project.

#### February 2009

- The Clyde: an opportunity to compare and contrast redevelopment activity with that seen on our Dundee visit.

#### June 2009

- Highlands (Skye): a visit would fit in well with the Year of Homecoming and the production of our Gaelic language plan; and would afford the opportunity to look at archaeology, coastal erosion and landscape issues (including wind farms).

#### Others considered:

- Edinburgh Castle: we could probably do this in the margins of a non-travelling meeting.
- St Andrews
- Bute
- Overseas

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## POSSIBLE HSB VISITS, 2008/09

### Dumfries House

Dumfries House is a country house standing in a designed landscape near Cumnock, East Ayrshire. It was designed and built between 1754-1759 by John, Robert and James Adam. The house was built for William Dalrymple-Crichton, 4<sup>th</sup> earl of Dumfries and came into the possession by maternal succession of the earls of Bute. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Marquess of Bute commissioned internal and external additions to the flanking wings and quadrants by Robert Weir Schultz in 1895-1899. The house has been in continuous occupation since it was built.

The house was put up for sale earlier this year. In June, the First Minister agreed to support the Great Steward of Scotland's Dumfries House Trust by contributing £5m towards the purchase price. The purchase of Dumfries House is also being supported by the National Heritage Memorial Fund, the Art Fund and the Monument Trust. The sale has now been completed. It is a condition of grant that Friends of Historic Scotland receive a discount of 50% on entrance fees. We believe the house will be open to the public in May 2008 and will close in September.

### Perthshire and Stanley Mills

Stanley Mills, which contains Sir Richard Arkwright's Bell Mill, the first mill building in Scotland, is located on the River Tay 5 miles north of Perth. It comprises a group of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century water-powered mill buildings that in the 1990s had become derelict and were under threat of demolition. In 1996, to prevent this happening, the entire complex was purchased by Historic Scotland.

Since acquiring Stanley Mills, Historic Scotland has, with considerable financial support from the Heritage Lottery Fund, overseen the development of the site, including the disposal of two of the later mills for conversion to housing. In recent years, Historic Scotland has completed the recording and conservation of the original lades system, the landscaping of the site and the external conservation of the Bell Mill.

PIC are currently completing work on the internal adaptation of the Bell Mill and part of the Mid Mill to form a new visitor centre with education and community facilities which will open to the public for Easter 2008. Stanley Mills will be opening next year. A visit to the Mill could be linked to a wider tour in Perthshire, where there are casework and property related matters of interest.

### The Antonine Wall

The AW has been nominated for World Heritage status this year. Whether or not it succeeds, it offers an opportunity to look at a number of key issues for Historic Scotland including site management, partnership, issues of setting and context and casework. It is also a complex site in terms of the number of Local Authorities and stakeholders involved, including some of the most economically disadvantaged areas in the country. This would provide an opportunity to examine community and heritage issues from a different perspective. The Board might also visit the Falkirk Wheel, as part of the overall 'package' of attractions that, with the Wall, central Scotland offers.

## The Clyde

The Board may wish to talk about development at the waterfront. The Greenock Sugar warehouse, which is facing new use imminently, would be of value. Historic Scotland is working with Clydeport on this case and others, which may also be worth considering. The Greenock Telegraph has advocated reuse and has run a series of articles calling for it to be put forward as a possible World Heritage Site. The paper has also run stories quoting local people unhappy about the plan for it to be used as residential development as it is an industrial building. As part of a visit to the Clyde, the Board COULD also visit the WWII defence structures all along this section.

## Highlands (Skye)

Skye could provide a good focus for a Board's visit. This is the Highland Year of Culture, next year will see the main work on Historic Scotland's Gaelic Language Plan, and 2009 is the Year of Homecoming. It could be valuable for the Board to discuss whatever work is current in a Gaelic-speaking area, perhaps talking to a bilingual local authority. This could also provide an opportunity for a less buildings-focussed visit: covering archaeology and coastal erosion; good-quality upstanding prehistoric archaeology; associated links to arts/culture on the island; and good relict agricultural landscapes (surveyed by RCAHMS), a visit to which could inform discussions about the European Landscape Convention and historic landscapes – for example, in relation to possible legislative reform that might include a new 'historic landscape' designation.

## Edinburgh Castle

Edinburgh Castle is situated at the heart of Edinburgh's World Heritage Site and is Historic Scotland's most visited property, attracting over 1.2m visitors annually.

Properties in Care are in the process of completing a major project aimed at improving visitor reception. The project involves the creation of a new terrace and modern ticket office, a new website with integral ticket purchasing capabilities, a new Visitor Reception Team, and a sales and marketing strategy aimed at increasing income. It is part of a continuing programme of visitor improvements at Edinburgh Castle which included the recent completion of a new education facility, functions room and exhibition on the Prisoners of War. This project is aimed to be completed in late January 2008.

## St Andrews

St Andrews is an important Scottish Burgh with good surviving medieval sites: Historic Scotland has two guardianship sites: the castle and cathedral ruins. The town retains early university buildings and a good surviving layout of a planned burgh, as well as an historic golf course. A visit to St Andrews would allow the Board to examine a range of consents, including PIC and related issues.

## Bute

Bute is an important island and home of the 3rd and 4th Marquess of Bute, both key figures in the history of conservation in Scotland. Sites to visit include Mount Stuart, Category A, home of the Butes by Sir Robert Rowand Anderson; towerhouses such as Kames Castle and

Wester Kames; and the town of Rothesay, an important resort in late 19th and early 20th century which is struggling to regenerate itself.

### Oversees

International comparisons could be particularly helpful and need not prove expensive. Vienna and Boston were mentioned as possibilities.

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