

Investment Review

Archaeology

Funding Programmes

improving systems, setting priorities



Consultation Paper

HISTORIC  SCOTLAND

If you value Scotland's rich past as represented by its archaeological sites and ancient monuments, and believe society should care for the physical evidence of that past and seek to understand it better, we seek your views. We need feedback from those who have received – or been refused – funding from the programmes reviewed here. If your interest is for one special site or topic, we need to hear from you too, because your special case may cast light on a wider issue. This a chance for you to help Historic Scotland – and the whole historic environment sector – make better use of the public funds we invest in studying and protecting Scotland's historic environment.

Archaeology programme (grants and commissions)

Ancient Monuments Grants programme

Management Agreements programme

Historic Scotland

28 March 2007

Introduction

1.1 This consultation paper invites views on the priorities and operation of Historic Scotland's investment programmes for the archaeological sector, covering archaeological operations, grants for conservation work on ancient monuments and agreements for the management of ancient monuments. It completes the process begun in 2004 with the review of Historic Environment Grants.

Responding to this consultation paper

1.2 We invite written responses to this consultation paper by 30 June 2007. Please send your response, marked "Investment Review" to:

hs.inspectorate@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

or

Investment Review

Inspectorate APAGA Team

Historic Scotland

Room G55D

Longmore House

Salisbury Place

Edinburgh

EH9 1SH

or

By fax to: 0131 668 8765

If you have any queries please contact Noel Fojut of the Archaeology Programmes and Grants Advice Team on 0131 668 8650.

1.3 Please indicate clearly in your response the parts of the consultation paper to which you are responding. This will aid our analysis of responses.

1.4 This consultation, and all other Scottish Executive consultation exercises, can be viewed online on the consultation web pages of the Scottish Executive website at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations>. The consultation can also be viewed on the Historic Scotland website at www.historic-scotland.gov.uk. You can telephone Freephone 0800 77 1234 to find out where your nearest public internet access point is.

1.5 The Scottish Executive now has an email alert system for consultations (SEconsult: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations/seconsult.aspx>). This system allows stakeholder individuals and organisations to register and receive a weekly email containing details of all new consultations (including web links). SEconsult complements, but in no way replaces SE distribution lists, and is designed to allow stakeholders to keep up to date with all SE consultation activity, and therefore be alerted at the earliest opportunity to those of most interest. We would encourage you to register.

Handling your response

1.6 We need to know how you wish your response to be handled and, in particular, whether you are happy for your response to be made public. Please complete and return the Respondent Information Form enclosed with this consultation paper as this will ensure that we treat your response appropriately. If you ask for your response not to be published we will regard it as confidential and treat it accordingly.

1.7 All respondents should be aware that Historic Scotland, as an agency of the Scottish Executive, is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and would therefore have to consider any request made to it under the Act for information relating to responses made to this consultation exercise.

Next steps in the process

1.8 Where respondents have given permission for their response to be made public (see the attached Respondent Information Form), these will be made available to the public in the Scottish Executive Library by 31 July 2007 and on the Scottish Executive consultation web pages by the same date. We will check all responses where agreement to publish has been given for any potentially defamatory material before logging them in the library or placing them on the website. You can make arrangements to view responses by contacting the Scottish Executive Library on 0131 244 4565. Responses can be copied and sent to you, but a charge may be made for this service.

1.9 Following the closing date, all responses will be analysed and considered along with any other available evidence to help us determine directions for Historic Scotland's archaeological investment from 2008-9 onwards. We aim to issue a report on this consultation process by 31 August 2007. This report will outline any significant changes arising from this review, and the timetable for action.

Comments and complaints

1.10 If you have any comments about how this consultation exercise has been conducted, please send them to Noel Fojut as detailed above.

Context of the review

2.1 Ancient sites and monuments decay steadily under the influence of gravity, weather and general wear and tear. Seeking to preserve every vestige of the past without regard to cost or lost development opportunities is not an option. Important as our historic environment may be, funding is not limitless. Therefore all efforts towards management and investigation of the historic environment must be carefully targeted.

2.2 This consultation seeks the views of interested and experienced stakeholders as the first stage of a review aimed at refreshing the priorities and systems used by Historic Scotland to determine where we invest the public funds made available to us to support the management and investigation of Scotland's archaeology and ancient monuments.

2.3 Historic Scotland is by no means the only funder of archaeological investigations and site management activities. We seek to deepen our understanding of the interests, objectives and capabilities of other stakeholders and to work with them, placing our investment collaboratively rather than competitively.

2.4 Our investment in these areas – currently about £1.85 million per year – complements other strands of work entrusted to Historic Scotland, such as the direct management and presentation to the public of over 300 key sites, the protection of sites and monuments through legislation, setting of national policies and standards and the publication of advice and guidance.

2.5 It should be noted that Historic Scotland funds similar work on the 300-plus properties in its direct care separately. This review is concerned solely with the funding of archaeological activities outside our own estate.

2.6 Historic Scotland currently operates 3 external funding programmes under the terms of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (“the 1979 Act”). This review looks at each programme in turn. There are also important questions about balance between the funding streams, addressed at the end of this paper.

Funding streams reviewed (anticipated 2007-8 funding levels):

• Archaeology programme	£1,555,000 per year
• Ancient Monuments Grants programme	£250,000 per year
• Management Agreement programme	£45,000 per year

The Archaeology Programme

3.1 The Archaeology Programme operates under section 45 of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Its main purpose is to mitigate destruction of archaeological sites (including buildings) and landscapes through projects involving survey, excavation, advice, training and education and to make accounts of the work available for general and specialist audiences. Work is commissioned on a commercial basis or (wherever possible) by grants to bodies such as universities or heritage trusts. There is a single annual bidding cycle, with bids submitted during September and decisions announced in January. Urgent projects can, however, be considered at any time of year. Investment per project can range from over £250,000 (phased over several years) to sums of a few hundred pounds.

3.2 The strategic objectives of the programme are to:

- achieve a better understanding of our past;
- improve techniques for preserving and interpreting surviving evidence;
- ensure that important sites which cannot be preserved are recorded;
- develop the knowledge base for owners of sites and monuments and for all with an interest in land management;
- encourage community participation and build capacity, and
- publish information relating to all of the above.

3.3 Within that framework, Historic Scotland sets operational priorities which are continuously reviewed. The last comprehensive published statement on priorities was published in 1997 as “State Funded ‘Rescue’ Archaeology in Scotland”. This identified a series of priorities centred on archaeological periods and topics. While there is no doubt that such period and thematic research agendas remain important, recent years have seen a growing realisation of the importance of understanding and managing the archaeological resource, without which future research will be impossible.

3.4 Historic Scotland’s current Corporate Plan (2005-8) reflects these new priorities in the key areas of endeavour it sets for the archaeology programme:

- completing necessary survey work to inform management of the Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site;
- progressing, in partnership with the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, national coverage of the interactive Historic Land Use Assessment;
- analysing the patterns of loss arising from coastal erosion and developing a coherent response;

- continuing to publish surveys of Scotland’s Historic Burghs, and
- investigating archaeological loss within ploughlands and methods of mitigation.

3.5 Historic Scotland expects the projects it funds to do more than just explore individual sites, however interesting. They must also contribute towards a broader understanding of key issues, progressing two broad and overlapping groups of agendas:

- Archaeological research/knowledge agendas which target particular periods, themes or regions, and aim to identify key gaps in knowledge, thus directing future research. Important within this group are scientific agendas such as the refinement of dating techniques or the identification of raw material sources.
- Historic environment management/interpretation agendas which focus on how best to understand and manage the resource as well as increasing public access and other benefits. Generally there is consensus on objectives but less agreement about the most effective methods.

Historic Scotland may seek to stimulate the development of specific agendas where there is consensus on need but lack of action within the archaeological sector at large – for example our long-term support of improvements in radiocarbon dating or our recent efforts to stimulate co-ordinated research into Scotland’s rich wetland archaeology.

3.6 Historic Scotland will continue to fund a wide variety of projects, ranging from site-specific investigations to research into processes of change. The potential of newly proposed projects to contribute to existing and developing agendas will increasingly be a primary consideration for funding decisions. However, it remains our aim to complete and publish existing projects at a rate which balances new starts. In practice, this means that the amount of funding available for new projects in any year will continue to be intimately related to our progress in bringing existing projects to a successful conclusion.

Archaeology Programme Questions

- Q1.** Which aspects of the Archaeology programme work well, and which less well, under the current arrangements?
- Q2.** What are the key current and future challenges that the Archaeology programme should address?
- Q3.** What changes would you like to see made to policies, priorities or procedures?

The Ancient Monuments Grants programme

4.1 The Ancient Monuments Grants programme, under section 24 of the 1979 Act, makes grants available to the owners of ancient monuments. Grants are intended to assist owners (or those authorised by them) to preserve, maintain and manage monuments in their possession and, where appropriate, to open and present them to the public.

4.2 The guiding principle is to preserve sites as they have come down to our day, without radical structural interventions or rebuilding. Work is funded only if it halts, or significantly slows down, structural deterioration for at least 10 years – and ideally for a generation or more. Typical projects include masonry consolidation and the removal of damaging vegetation, often with a modest element of interpretation. Individual grants may be as large as £200,000 (phased over several years) although most are smaller, from £5,000 to £30,000 per annum. Because conservation work to ancient monuments seldom provides future financial benefits to owners, grant levels may be generous, typically from 50% to 75% of qualifying costs. Small and urgent works may be grant aided at full cost, especially when undertaken in collaboration with conservation charities.

4.3 Each case is assessed on its own merits. Success depends upon the significance of the monument, the urgency of its needs and the availability of funds at the time the case comes forward. The existence of a committed owner or local group to press forward a proposal and to supply or identify additional funding, or help in kind, is a key consideration.

4.4 Owners who have expressed interest in applying for AM Grant are entitled to receive an Architect's Advisory Report from Historic Scotland. This is a scoping document which identifies the needs of a monument and sets them into context. One of its main purposes is to ensure that the superficially urgent is not addressed at the expense of less obvious but more serious issues.

4.5 The Ancient Monuments Grants programme is managed on a rolling basis without fixed application deadlines, although once approved for funding, a costed timetable of works is developed and agreed for each project.

Ancient Monuments Grants Questions

- Q4.** Which aspects of the Ancient Monuments Grants system work well, and which less well, under the current arrangements?
- Q5.** What changes would you like to see made to policies, priorities or procedures?
- Q6.** Do potential applicants and their professional advisers find the Architects' Advisory Reports and other advice provided by Historic Scotland of value?

The Management Agreement programme

5.1 The programme operates under Section 17 of the 1979 Act. Management Agreements can cover a very wide variety of works of preservation, and also presentation and public access. Agreements are voluntary but legally binding. They can include payments for capital or current expenditure, but are not intended to provide any profit element.

5.2 The difference between work suitable for Management Agreements and that suitable for Ancient Monuments Grants is the need to secure a management regime for a period of several years. Typical actions include control of vegetation and burrowing animals, exclusion of livestock or removing sites from cultivation. Ideally, the change of use supported by an Agreement goes on to become embedded in the owner's routine land management, so that the value of the monument comes to be appreciated and good management continues without further payment.

5.3 Historic Scotland currently funds 15 Agreements, with annual payments ranging from as little as £80 to more than £5,000. In addition, over 300 scheduled monuments on Forestry Commission Scotland land benefit from Management Plans between FCS and Historic Scotland. These use the Management Agreement formula, with FCS meeting its own costs, as is established policy for the management of historic environment assets owned by government bodies.

5.4 As is the case with archaeology and ancient monuments grants, there are other potential sources of funding for site management. In recent years, schemes operating in the agriculture and forestry sectors have included payments for maintaining or enhancing the environmental value of land (where environment includes the archaeological dimension). It is envisaged that future Land Management Contract arrangements, currently being finalised, will also provide opportunities for beneficial site management. Some conservation charities also support historic environment management aims, often alongside nature conservation. Historic Scotland seeks to work in collaboration with all other funders, providing expertise and advice on best practice as well as money.

Management Agreement Questions

- Q7.** What works well about Management Agreements, and what less well, under the current arrangements?
- Q8.** What are the key current and future challenges in the area of monument management?
- Q9.** What changes would you like to see made to policies, priorities or procedures?

Balance between programmes

6.1 Taking the three “archaeological programmes” together as 100%, Historic Scotland spends approximately 85% on archaeological rescue and research, 12.5% on grants for capital works to slow or arrest the physical decay of ancient monuments, and 2.5% on agreements to manage ancient monuments in ways which reduce their rate of decay.

Questions of Balance

- Q10.** Is the current distribution of funds among the three programmes equitable, and if not, how would you prefer to see funds distributed – and why?
- Q11.** Is total expenditure on these activities, as a share of Historic Scotland’s overall budget, at an appropriate level? If not, which areas of our operations should be afforded a lower priority, so as to free up more funds for archaeology and monument management?



