

**OUR PAST, OUR FUTURE (OPOF)
STRATEGY STEERING GROUP MINUTES**

12 MAY 2025, 1400-1600HRS

ONLINE VIA MS TEAMS

IN ATTENDANCE:

Alison Turnbull (AT), Adam Jackson (AJ), Andrew Hopetoun (AH), Callum Grigor (CG), Caroline Clark (CC), Catherine Cartmell (CCart), Gavin MacGregor (GM), Hazel Johnson (HJ), Ian Freeman (IF), Jilly Burns (JB), Kirsty Haslam (KH), Marjorie Perotto (MP), Mark Geddes (MG), Rob Dickson (RD)

DELEGATES:

Diarmid Hearn (DH) for Philip Long, Eithne Ní Chonghaile (ENC) for Lucy Casot, Paul Zealey (PZ) for Chris Brodie

APOLOGIES: Margaret McSporran, James Fowlie, Tony McCaffery, Jonathan Hunt, Peter Rawcliffe, Emma Berry, Shona Riach, Allan Lindsay

1. WELCOME

AT welcomed attendees to the fourth meeting of the National Strategy Steering Group

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting were approved and will be published.

All actions from the previous meeting were noted as completed.

3. PROGRAMME MANAGER REPORT

JB presented a report on OPOF programme delivery since the previous meeting and noted good progress across all three priorities, highlighting progress on skills (funding confirmed for Scotland's Centre of Excellence for Canals & Traditional Skills at Lock 16; publication of Skills Investment Plan (SIP) Year 1 Report) and HES awarding £3.9 million in Partnership Fund activities that align and support delivery of OPOF's outcomes.

The group noted the need to focus on harnessing stakeholder collaboration for Net Zero activities in the short-term. This covered the importance of Heat in Buildings bill; the importance of adaptation (and its reporting); training & skills development, landscape and land-use. The Steering Group were asked to provide additional input/support with the next stage of discussions and activities, which they agreed to.

JB updated that due to workload, planned EDI and Wellbeing sessions will shift to Autumn 2025. The Steering Group approved this but also flagged concern on level of resource to support OPOF development and ongoing interest in providing a steer, where needed.

Action 1: National Strategy team to meet IF to consider learnings on adaptation

Action 2: National Strategy team to meet GM to consider landscape & land-use

Action 3: National Strategy team to follow up with Steering Group on support for next stage of developments of agreed programme delivery

4. DATA & EVIDENCE REPORT

MP provided an overview on developing areas of data and evidence (Skills, Community Wealth Building and Volunteering) and requested ongoing Steering Group input on additional data sources to be utilised.

Action 4: KH to issue new Heritage Volunteering Survey by correspondence and ALL members are asked to share with their networks.

Action 5: ALL to consider additional data sets and provide updates or contacts to MP as appropriate

5. SCOTLAND'S HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT FORUM (SHEF) UPDATE

KH provided an update on the agenda and current attendance at SHEF 2025.

Members requested consideration of how to best demonstrate collective nature of activities at SHEF and emphasis on action. MGS offered to share experience from their recent event.

AT noted interest in member(s) of the Steering Group delivering the closing session, to promote the group and support this ongoing action.

Action 6: National Strategy Team to ensure SHEF briefings for opening addresses, provocation and closing create clear narrative of collective activity and ongoing action.

Action 7: National Strategy team to approach Steering Group member(s) to host final session

6. SKILLS INVESTMENT PLAN (SIP) UPDATE

CCart provided update on Year 1 report of the Skills Investment Plan, and progress of current activity streams, including the Employer Survey.

Members were interested in the avenues and funding for skills training, and for the resources required. CCart highlighted Lock 16, the Craft your Career programme and role of apprenticeships. Members highlighted importance of cross-sector learning, noting Dumfries House, Welsh Government work in this area and relationships with creative sector.

The group noted potential to devote a future Steering Group session specifically to Skills.

Action 8: KH to share Employers Survey by correspondence and ALL members to share with their networks as appropriate.

Action 9: National Strategy team to note Skills as a topic of interest for future Steering Group discussion

7. FORWARD PLANNING

JB noted recent Steering Group consultation had highlighted interest in facilitating discussions on specific live topics. It was proposed and agreed future shorter, single topic discussions would be arranged (as required) either within meetings or as separate sessions.

Action 10: National Strategy team to arrange post-SHEF Steering Group discussion (45-60 minutes) for June/July 2025.

8. COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING (SCOTLAND) BILL DISCUSSION

The group welcomed HES representatives George Findlater (GF) (Head of Community and Economic Development), Bea Nicholl (BN) (Sustainable Place Manager) and Craig Wilson (CW) (Development Officer) to the meeting.

GF, BN and CW provided an overview of HES activity around Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill, including points of engagement, consultation and relationship to placemaking. Potential to support response to the Bill and alignment with OPOF noted.

Action 11: ALL to share any current/planned Community Wealth Building activity with OPOF team to support reporting and upcoming response, where relevant.

9. DISCUSSION ON ALIGNMENT BETWEEN OPOF AND SCOTLAND THE PERFECT STAGE (STPS)

RD presented an overview of STPS and alignment with OPOF, particularly in relation to net zero, fair work, and wellbeing of individuals and communities.

Members recognised role of historic environment in creating sense of place for events, and the role events play in use/adaption/re-use of existing historic assets.

The range and scale of events that involve the historic environment was highlighted, with a particular focus on small and medium sized events as potential to support the visitor economy and local community wealth building. Potential for strategic development of portfolio of events, based on location or theme, as well as the role of events in celebrating intangible cultural heritage was emphasised. The implications of Martyn's Law, particularly on small to medium sized event venues, was also identified.

Action 12: MP to follow-up with RD to explore data and evidence alignment between STPS and OPOF

Action 13: RD to follow-up as required for additional information/ discussion on points raised

10. AOB

AT noted preference in the future for fewer items on the agenda and increased time for discussion. She also added that the potential for focused, single-topic discussion sessions between full meetings could support this.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

Next meeting is 5 November 2025, provisionally at Longmore House in Edinburgh.

ACTION LOG

Action	Assigned to	Deadline
1. National Strategy team to meet with IF to consider learnings on adaption	National Strategy team, IF	July 2025
2. National Strategy team to meet with GM to consider role of landscape & land-use	National Strategy team, GM	July 2025
3. National Strategy team to follow up with Steering Group on support for next stage of developments of agreed programme delivery	National Strategy team	August 2025
4. KH to issue Volunteering Survey by correspondence and ALL members are asked to share with their networks.	All	June 2025
5. ALL to consider additional data sets and provide update or contacts to MP as appropriate	All	August 2025
6. National Strategy Team to ensure briefings for opening addresses, provocation and closing at SHEF create clear narrative of collective activity and ongoing action.	National Strategy team	June 2025
7. National Strategy team to approach Steering Group member(s) to host final session	National Strategy team	June 2025
8. KH to share employers survey in post meeting correspondence and ALL members to share with their networks as	All	June 2025
9. National Strategy team to note Skills as a topic of interest for future Steering Group discussion	National Strategy team, CCart	November 2025
10. Post SHEF review discussion meeting to be arranged for June/July 2025.	All	November 2025
11. ALL to share any current/planned community wealth building activity with OPOF team to support reporting and upcoming response, where relevant.	All	August 2025
12. MP to follow-up with RD to explore alignment of data and evidence between STPS and OPOF	MP, RD	June 2025
13. RD to follow-up as required for additional information/ discussion on points raised	RD	June 2025