

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

**20 NOVEMBER 2024, 1000-1200hrs
Engine Shed, Stirling and Online via Ms teams**

IN ATTENDANCE:

Allan Lindsay (AL), Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture, Angus Robertson MSP (AR), Alison Turnbull (AT), Callum Grigor (CG), Gavin MacGregor (GM), Hazel Johnson (HJ), Ian Freeman (IF), Katherine Brown (KB), Lucy Casot (LC), Margaret McSparran (MM), Rob Dickson (RD), Shona Riach (SR), Adam Jackson (AJ), Catherine Cartmell (CC), Eleanor Styles (ES), Jilly Burns (JB), Marjorie Perotto (MP)

DELEGATES:

Diarmid Hearn (DH) for Philip Long, Elaine Ellis (EE) for Chris Brodie and Megan Braithwaite (MB) for Caroline Clark

APOLOGIES:

Andrew Hopetoun, Emma Berry, James Fowlie, Jane Morrison-Ross, Peter Rawcliffe and Tony McCaffery

PREVIOUS ACTIONS

1. WELCOME

Alison Turnbull (AT) welcomed attendees to the third meeting of the Strategy Steering Group.

2. ADDRESS FROM CABINET SECRETARY

The Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture, Angus Robertson MSP (AR) addressed the meeting, describing the Scottish Government's role in fostering relationships with those who have an interest in Scotland, both domestically and internationally, and strong commitment to utilise these to respond to the development needs of Our Past, Our Future. AR challenged the group to consider how the historic environment could better engage with and maximise the support of others, emphasising the importance and strength of the Scottish diaspora and New Scots, as well as the value in a unified approach as exemplified by "Brand Scotland". AR finished by complimenting the group on its work so far but also communicating the importance of interconnectedness and collaboration to advance shared ambitions.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

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

4. PROGRAMME MANAGER HIGHLIGHT REPORT

Jilly Burns (JB), National Strategy Programme Manager, presented the highlight report on the delivery activity undertaken since the last meeting.

Responsive to the concerns raised over the potential challenges to be faced in implementing OPOF in local, regional and sector delivery structures, a new workstream focussing on Sector/Stakeholder Infrastructure was added. Members stressed the importance of linking national plans with regional priorities and were content with the addition. JB reported good progress and no other significant risks or issues on the OPOF workstreams.

Catherine Cartmell (CC) flagged a risk around the delivery of the Skills Investment Plan (SIP) due to the scale of challenges, capacity and lack of dedicated resources, which would result in difficulties delivering on the skills-related outcomes of OPOF. Members considered mitigations proposed to be adequate.

Members noted the need for continued alignment with other related strategies, including the Scotland's Museums and Galleries Strategy, the Culture Strategy for Scotland and the Scotland Outlook 2030 Tourism Strategy.

ACTION 1: National Strategy team to meet with Museums Galleries Scotland to discuss alignment.

5. DEVELOPMENT PHASE ADVISORY ACTIVITIES

JB presented an update on work to develop advisory activities. Members content with direction of travel.

ACTION 2: ALL to cascade relevant advisory activity to colleagues for involvement and National Strategy team set up further discussions.

6. SHEF 2025 PLANNING

Eleanor Styles (ES), National Strategy Coordinator, presented an update on plans for the next Scotland Historic Environment Forum (SHEF) event.

Members agreed on the importance of strategic targeting for attendees, including a broader reach beyond the sector. Concerns were raised about balancing an invite-only participation with shared ownership and inclusivity. Suggestions for content included focusing on emerging themes such as skills, storytelling with data, and the visitor economy.

ACTION 3: National Strategy team to develop event brief.

ACTION 4: ALL to feed in suggestions for attendees.

7. DATA & EVIDENCE NETWORK

Marjorie Perotto (MP), National Strategy Data Analyst, invited reflections on the proposal to form a Data and Evidence Network. Members were content and made suggestions for leads such as leveraging local place plans and other data sources for evidence-based decision-making.

ACTION 5: MP to follow up on suggestions and arrange meetings with organisations suggested by the Steering Group.

8. FORWARD PLANNING

JB opened a discussion on long-term planning for OPOF, inviting any reflections on trends and horizon scanning from members.

Members emphasized the changes in the visitor economy market and more broadly the need for innovation and new approaches to resource allocation. Other trends noted included growing interest in community asset ownership and resilience as key focus areas for funding.

JB raised the need to consider future meeting frequency and locations. AT noted the intention to revisit the format of the Steering Group into 2025 to ensure that it was serving a strategic purpose for members.

9. AOB

Callum Grigor (CG), shared updates on the Scottish Government’s engagement with the UK Government and DCMS on Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). Members highlighted Scotland's leadership in ICH and potential for international collaboration.

AT noted the live consultation for Historic Environment Scotland’s corporate plan, closing on 3rd January.

Next meeting date to be arranged.

ACTION LOG

Action	Assigned to	Deadline
National Strategy team to meet with Museums Galleries Scotland to discuss alignment.	National Strategy team	December 2024
Cascade relevant advisory activity to colleagues for involvement and National Strategy team set up further discussions.	ALL	February 2025
National Strategy team to develop SHEF event brief.	National Strategy team	February 2025
ALL to feed in suggestions for SHEF attendees.	ALL	February 2025
Follow up on suggestions and arrange meetings with organisations suggested by the Steering Group.	MP	February 2025