



Welcome to the Spring 2025 edition of the volunteer newsletter!

Hello, I am Katerina Brown and I am the new Chief Executive at HES. Since starting my role in September, I've enjoyed getting out to various sites and meeting people across the organisation. I look forward to continuing to do this in the future and hope to meet a many of you as possible in person during the course of 2025.

Having spent the last four years as Chief Operating Officer at the National Trust for Scotland, I recognise the passion and knowledge you all bring to your varied volunteering activities. Thank you for supporting HES as a volunteer and helping us to

protect, research and celebrate Scotland's historic environment.

I also want to take this opportunity to welcome the new volunteers who joined us in 2024 at locations across the country, from Bishop's and Earl's Palaces in the north to Melrose Abbey in the south, Dumbarton Castle in the west and to Craigmillar Castle in the east.

We've also been developing some new volunteering roles, and you can find out more about the pilot volunteering project with the National Collection of Aerial Photography (NCAP) in this

edition of the Volunteer Newsletter.

We are always keen to hear feedback and welcome any thoughts you may have. Please share ideas and feedback with your volunteer coordinator or the Volunteer Development Officer, via volunteering@hes.scot.

Katerina Brown



Image: Rosie Wylie (left) with volunteers at Edinburgh Castle

Farewell from Rosie Wylie: After 17 years, I'm leaving Historic Environment Scotland for pastures new with Volunteer Scotland as their new Head of Delivery, Innovation and Operations. I've been involved in leading and developing Historic Environment Scotland's volunteering programme since 2009 and know some of you have been with us since this journey began for me. I would like to say one final thank you so much for the time and energy you all give. I am leaving volunteering in the capable hands of our Volunteer Development Officer and watch this space for a hello from the new Community Development and Volunteering Manager once they are recruited.

Volunteering updates: NCAP Digital Connectors

Volunteer Development Officer, Kirsty, has been working with Ben Reiss, Collections Manager at the [National Collection of Aerial Photography \(NCAP\)](#), to develop a new volunteering role: the NCAP Digital Connector. This is currently a pilot project, engaging volunteers from various backgrounds including the Medmenham Association, an association of former and serving Imagery Analysts (formerly known as Photographic Interpreters). We are delighted to initially welcome 10 NCAP Digital Connectors to the Historic Environment Scotland (HES) volunteering programme.

NCAP is an internationally significant collection of aerial imagery, that operates within HES. It is one of the largest collections of its kind in the world and includes over 30 million high-resolution aerial images. Many of these are from UK government public records that were declassified by the Ministry of Defence and which NCAP maintains under an arrangement with The National Archives, UK as a formal Place of Deposit.

The collections include images taken during the Second World War and the Cold War, as well as extensive aerial surveys undertaken of the UK and former British colonial territories throughout the twentieth century. These photographs form a crucial record of environmental and human impact on the globe over the past century.

Volunteers will engage with already digitised aerial photographs, looking to footprint, or identify the geographical area covered, by each image. This involves examining each image in turn and using the original sortie plots—diagrams of the aircraft's known flight path—to match the photos with a modern map. Where there is no sortie plot available, the volunteers will use their research skills to identify the locations of the photographs. This will make these images usable by, and accessible to, the public on NCAP's brand new Air Photo Finder.

As a pilot for one of our first digital volunteering role, we are seeking feedback as the project progresses, and look forward to sharing updates with you all in future editions of the Volunteer Newsletter.



Image left: Hopefully the NCAP Digital Connectors will be able to identify and locate this mystery castle in France; Collection: NARA, Sortie: 111TRS/R/0077, Frame: 0020 (06 December 1945)

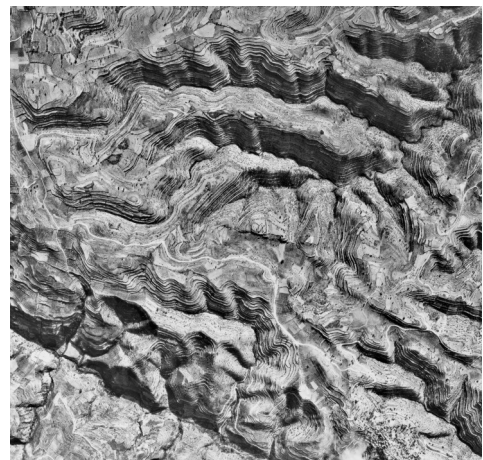


Image right: An image of a dramatically terraced landscape in Cyprus awaits footprinting; Collection: Directorate of Overseas Surveys, Sortie: 162/CY/0001, Frame: 0031 (26 September 1976)

Make Your Mark



Image: Make Your Mark logo

We recognise that while many of you give your time as a volunteer to HES, you may also be involved with other heritage volunteering organisations or groups. If so, do you know if this organisation is involved with [Make Your Mark](#), the national campaign to support everyone in Scotland to volunteer with history, culture and nature organisations?

Make Your Mark was officially launched in 2020 and now involves over 100 heritage organisations across Scotland, ranging from national to local volunteer-involving organisations and across the breadth of heritage, including built, natural and cultural heritage. The Make Your Mark website includes resources for volunteers, highlighting current volunteering opportunities from organisations across Scotland (including HES). However, for volunteer-involving heritage organisations, Make Your Mark promotes volunteering opportunities, connects heritage volunteer organisers to a peer-to-peer network, organises inclusive volunteering case study events and shares best practice. If this is something you feel a volunteer involving organisation you know of might be interested in, they can reach out to hello@makeyourmark.scot to find out more and maybe even become a member (it's free!) to access lots of resources.

Make Your Mark in action: Supporting co-design taster sessions



Image: Participants look for masons' marks at Glasgow Cathedral

One of the activities that Make Your Mark has been involved with over the last year is the development of co-designed taster sessions. These sessions pair up a Make Your Mark member organisation with a group who is under-represented in their volunteering area, and, at HES, we have been supporting the development of a taster session between the Scottish Stonemasons' Marks Project and Access to Industry.

The Scottish Stonemasons' Marks Project (SSMP) investigates and records masons' marks on the medieval castles and churches of Scotland, while Access to Industry is an organisation that works across Scotland with unemployed people who face barriers to employment. A co-design workshop took place between representatives from SSMP and Access to Industry at Glasgow Cathedral in October, which focused on learning about options for getting involved with SSMP. The planned follow-on sessions will focus on surveying masons' marks at Linlithgow Palace and attending training as to how to digitally engage with the work of SSMP, including the inputting of data into databases and making scale drawings.

Volunteer Spotlight

What's your name? Fraser Macnaughton

How long have you been volunteering? Since 2011 or 2012

Where do you volunteer? I volunteer at the Heart of Neolithic Orkney, based at the Ring of Brodgar



Image: Fraser Macnaughton, volunteer at the Heart of Neolithic Orkney

What does your volunteer role involve? Primarily, I engage and share stories with visitors. Because we don't have written records from the Neolithic period, I like to use the visitor's imagination and own experiences and encourage them to take the time to ponder and reflect on the site, the wider landscape and the people who shaped it. This is particularly helpful because of the age of the Ring of Brodgar—if I know a visitor has visited, or knows about, Stonehenge or the Egyptian pyramids or Petra I can use this to connect them to the sites in Orkney.

Have you learnt any new skills? I've enjoyed learning to think about the site in an interdisciplinary way. I have a background in religion and philosophy but I like to see what we can draw from lots of subjects like archaeology and geology and see how they are all interconnected. I also enjoy encouraging people to accept that sometimes we don't know, and can't have, all the answers. I have developed my ability to let people make connections themselves and to make sure we are having a two-way conversation not a one-way imparting of information.

What is your most memorable moment? A particularly memorable moment is that before Covid I was involved in supporting a young archaeologists' club in the school holidays at the Ness of Brodgar. While the area the group were engaging with had already been excavated by archaeologists, there were still a couple of artefacts that the young people found and I know that one boy was so inspired by the experience he's gone on to be an archaeologist!

What do you enjoy most about volunteering? I like both talking to people, hearing their stories and finding out new information as discoveries continue to be made about Orkney's history. You also never quite know who you are going to meet—I was speaking to a couple for about half an hour or so and it turned out they were both history professors from New York! I enjoy getting to share Orkney with visitors.

TeamKinetic update

Since the last Volunteer Newsletter was published in the summer, it's been lovely to welcome many of you to join us on our TeamKinetic volunteering system, and we hope that you are finding using it is supporting your volunteering activity with HES.

In each Volunteer Newsletter we will provide a reminder about one of the features on TeamKinetic. This month we wanted to highlight that you can always revisit the Terms and Conditions of Volunteering that you agreed to when you first joined us, either on Team Kinetic and, if you joined us before TeamKinetic, that you would have signed during your induction. You can view these by logging in and navigating to the 'Resources & Help' tab on the left of your screen and clicking to 'Download' the Terms and Conditions of Volunteering Agreement. You can also view the document online, along with the detailed HES and TeamKinetic privacy policies from the 'Docs & Qualifications' tab and clicking on 'Check our terms and conditions of use'. If you would like a paper copy of these Terms and Conditions please speak to your volunteer coordinator or email volunteering@hes.scot.

In the last Newsletter, we also mentioned that we have been investigating the possibility of developing a volunteering app with TeamKinetic, so you can engage with your volunteering activity on the go. We haven't had the capacity to prioritise this in 2024 but would be keen to hear if this was something you feel you would want to use in the future.

We will also use TeamKinetic as a primary avenue for our volunteer survey which will be launched early in 2025. Do keep an eye out for this, as we really value your thoughts and feedback.

Conservation Volunteering in Action!



Image: Before (left) and after (right) pictures of the impact of gorse clearing by conservation volunteers in Holyrood Park (© D. MacEwan)

It's been a busy autumn in Holyrood Park and our team of conservation volunteers have been involved in a range of activities from translocating rare plants to managing gorse around high value butterfly habitat. These images, showing the before and after of the volunteers' gorse-clearing efforts, were kindly taken by a volunteer and clearly demonstrate the very positive impact their activity has in looking after the natural environment around the Park.



Want to feature in the next issue?

We'd love to hear from you! To share your volunteering story either have a chat with your volunteer coordinator or get in touch via volunteering@hes.scot

Do you follow us on social media? Here's where to find us:



Facebook: [@HistoricEnvScotland](https://www.facebook.com/HistoricEnvScotland)



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Instagram: [@HistEnvScot](https://www.instagram.com/HistEnvScot)

Blog: <https://blog.historicenvironment.scot>



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Images: round icons visually representing volunteer roles, including visitor experience, musician, gardener, forums & groups, events, conservation, archives, digital, and community archaeology.



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