

Scottish Group Newsletter

June 2009



AGM date

The 2009 Scottish Group AGM will be held on 23 October in Glasgow, followed by a social event. Details to be circulated shortly.

National Trust for Scotland

These are difficult times for the NTS, which is in the middle of a consultation process concerning potential job losses. Peter Hinton has written to Shonaig Macpherson, Chair of the NTS, expressing concern in relation to the archaeology team, and has received an assurance that the Trust will not take steps that will endanger its ability to fulfil its core purposes.

CPD

The IfA is organising two training courses in Scotland later this year with support from Historic Scotland. The course topics are desk-based assessments and report writing for archaeologists.

Dormant, dismal or just about OK? Survey of IfA members in Scotland

The SGIfA committee has recently surveyed IfA members in Scotland about their views on the performance of the IfA in Scotland, the Group, and priorities for the future. Twenty-seven responses (c 13%) came in and were analysed by IfA's Public Relations Coordinator, Kathryn Whittington. While rating of the Group's performance was generally less than ecstatic, the Group committee was greatly encouraged by the clarity of the message from members about what they want IfA to do for Scotland's archaeologists, and how closely those wishes match the committee's aspirations for new model for IfA engagement in Scottish matters. Your committee has tapped into new sources of energy, has obtained support from the IfA office and is determined to turn the Group around.

The committee will give the responses careful consideration over the coming weeks, but here are the headlines

- IfA should be less anglocentric, and in Scotland less Edinburgh focussed (roughly half the Scottish members are in Edinburgh, a quarter in Glasgow and the remainder equally split north and south of the central belt: plans are being prepared for SGIfA events in Glasgow, Orkney and the Highlands)
- there should be more activities for IfA members in Scotland (three seminars and two training events are in planning)
- the Group should provide a forum for discussion and IfA's staff should be responsible for action; there should be an IfA member of staff responsible for working on Scottish issues (SGIfA is represented on BEFS Historic Environment Working Group by IfA's Chief Executive, Peter Hinton, and Dan Atkinson: Pete also attends SGIfA committee meetings and is ensuring that increasing amounts of IfA staff time are devoted to

advocacy, training, publicity and membership recruitment of and for Scottish archaeologists)

- more use should be made of electronic media to communicate with members (this new bulletin is one example, and the Group's webpage, www.archaeologists.net/modules/icontent/index.php?page=106, is being revived)
- IfA should be recruiting amongst the larger employers in Scotland (please contact tim.howard@archaeologists.net if you would like a presentation or publicity material for you colleagues or if you can help set up a 'cell' of IfA recruiters and ambassadors in your workplace)
- IfA (and employers) should provide CPD and training events for Scotland (the first two courses are being set up, and Scottish members have provided a long list of suggestions for future courses)

Scottish Planning Policy consultation

The consultation on the SPP (www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/04/01132105/0) closes on 24 June. Tim Howard, IfA's Policy and Marketing Manager, will be working with the SGIfA committee to collate members' comments, so please send your views to tim.howard@archaeologists.net by 10 June.

The SPP will replace SPP23 and the long-standing NPPGs for archaeology and the historic environment later this year. It reduces guidance on planning and heritage to 718 words. Though underpinned by the SHEP (Scottish Historic Environment Policy), initial readings suggest the guidance package is sparse on the treatment of undesignated, undiscovered elements of the historic environment – in old money that's buried archaeological sites not present on the SMR. Will the new guidance allow challenges to the long-established principle of pre-determination assessment to inform planning decisions? What are the implications for the nature and scale of post-recession developer-funded archaeology? Your views count.

Proposed changes to heritage legislation

Scottish Government has just launched a consultation on the proposed provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Listed Buildings (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill (www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/currentconsultations).

According to the Historic Scotland website 'the Bill is a tightly-focused technical amending Bill that will introduce new provisions and remove barriers to the use of existing powers that will enhance the ability of the regulatory and planning authorities to manage our historic environment in a sustainable way for the enjoyment and benefit of future generations'. Again, IfA will be responding, so please send your comments to tim.howard@archaeologists.net by 18 July to allow Tim and the committee to prepare a submission.

Economic Impact of the Historic Environment in Scotland

Scotland's historic environment supports around 41,000 jobs and contributes more than £2.3 billion to the Scottish economy and is a key factor in ensuring sustained economic growth, according to the ECOTEC report, *Economic Impact of the Historic Environment in Scotland*, (www.heacs.org.uk). The report was submitted with HEACS' own *Report and Recommendations on the Economic Impact of the Historic Environment in Scotland* to Mike Russell, Minister for Culture, External Affairs and the Constitution, who says "For the first time we have clear evidence of just how much our historic environment contributes, not only to our sense of identity and place, but also to our national economy."

Scotland's Historic Environment Audit published

The latest SHEA has been published at www.heritageaudit.org.uk:80/findings.htm. The report provides an invaluable mine of statistical data on Scotland's historic environment. As the series continues it will produce information on how the condition and nature of that his historic environment has changed over time.

Marine Bill

On 30 April Scotland's first Marine Bill was introduced to the Scottish Parliament (www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2009/04/29162907).

Intended to promote more joined-up management of Scotland's seas, measures include

- a marine planning framework to manage use of the seas for energy, fishing, aquaculture, recreation etc
- Marine Planning Partnerships comprising local agencies, communities and other stakeholders
- a simpler licensing system for key growth areas such as renewable energy
- 'improved marine nature and historic conservation to safeguard and protect Scotland's unique habitats, wildlife and marine archaeology and wrecks'

Wanted

SGIfA seeks a Scottish correspondent to compile a regular e-bulletin for members and collate Scottish reports for *The Archaeologist*. Eager volunteers please contact Ellen McAdam on ellen.mcadam@csglasgow.org