



STRATEGIC PLAN 2022 TO 2027

Vision

Scotland's past is for everyone to research, share, enjoy and protect, home and abroad.

Mission Statement

The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland is an active global heritage charity providing expertise, support and resources to enhance and promote the understanding and enjoyment of Scotland's past. It empowers and facilitates research and innovation, advocating as an independent voice for heritage, and sharing knowledge of the past to everyone.

Values

*Collaboration, Opportunity and Transparency, Research Excellence, and Equality.
These are central to all that we do as a charity.*

Royal Charter and Laws

The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland is a charitable organisation whose purpose is set out in its Royal Charter from 1783:

"...a Society to investigate both antiquities and natural and civil history in general, with the intention that the talents of humanity should be cultivated and that the study of natural and useful sciences should be promoted."

The first Law of the Society focuses this further:

"The purpose of the Society shall be the study of the antiquities and history of Scotland, more especially by means of archaeological research."

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ABOUT US

The Society was established over 240 years ago, actively supporting the study and enjoyment of Scotland's past. Founded in 1780 and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1783 the Society's purpose is *"...to investigate both antiquities and natural and civil history in general, with the intention that the talents of mankind should be cultivated and that the study of natural and useful sciences should be promoted."*

More than 240 years on we continue to promote the understanding and conservation of Scotland's cultural heritage for the benefit of all. Today we are an independent charity stimulating discussion, collaboration and supporting research and publication, bringing Scotland's past to everyone.

Increasingly we are involved in helping to interpret the past for a contemporary audience, highlighting its relevance today. We can connect people to Scotland's past, supporting work which reviews, researches and explains all dimensions of our past, including aspects which may be regarded as contentious, even uncomfortable; providing, enabling and promoting expert and quality knowledge freely and accessibly to encourage everyone to understand, value and care for Scotland's unique heritage.

GOVERNANCE

The Society is a charitable membership organisation registered in Scotland and governed by a set of Laws as required by its Royal Charter of 1783. There are several thousand members, called Fellows since 1823, spread around the world, all connected through their interest in Scotland's past. Fellows are elected to the Society and can use the post-nominal "FSAScot". The Fellowship elect members to Council who become Trustees of the Society responsible for the governance of the charity. Elected Trustees work with an executive staff. The Society Annual General Meeting is known as its Anniversary Meeting and is normally held on St Andrews Day, 30 November.

FELLOWSHIP

Being a Fellow supports the aims and ethos of the Society, promoting shared values of inclusion, open access, transparency and the generation and transmission of knowledge. The Society welcomes anyone with an interest in Scotland's past and Fellows are encouraged to come together to share research, discuss the past and the future and engage in a spirit of Fellowship across the globe.

As an entirely independent organisation providing a voice separate from government, university or agency, the Society is principally reliant on its Fellowship for its resources. This independence allows the Society to advocate strongly on behalf of Scotland's past, articulating its value today.

RESOURCES

Trustees recognise that to maintain its current commitments, as well as likely future development, the Society must maintain and increase its available resources (in cash, personnel and property). Over the period of the Strategic Plan, steps will be taken to ensure income and expenditure will converge to result in balanced annual core budgets being agreed by 2027-28.

The Society will diversify its sources of income, building on the development of legacy donations, ethical sponsorship, and merchandising, and look to increase resources through current areas of expertise such as outreach, publication, events and research frameworks, as well as new areas when opportunities arise. The Society will always balance this with the priorities of accessibility and inclusion.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland is proud to be an inclusive, anti-racist, pro-equality and pro-diversity heritage charity. We believe that no one holds a monopoly on Scotland's history and that it should be shared by and for everyone. For over 240 years, we have provided expertise, support and resources to enhance and promote the understanding and enjoyment of Scotland's past and the global impact of the Scots. We empower and facilitate research and innovation, advocating as an independent voice for heritage matters, and sharing knowledge of the past with everyone; we are committed to working towards equality and accessibility in the Scottish heritage sector and beyond.

ENVIRONMENT

The Society has an active part to play in helping resolve the climate crisis. We will consider the impact on the environment of all our activities and strive towards carbon neutrality.

We aim to choose suppliers who minimise their environmental impact, for example in book printing, warehousing and distribution. Similarly, we will look to reduce environmental impact through our grants, promoting carbon neutrality and acknowledgement of the climate crisis. We will continue to provide hybrid lectures whenever possible to reduce travel and increase collaboration and will reduce the number of in-person meetings to reduce travel and other carbon impacts. Working with the Climate Heritage Network and others we will promote the opportunities that Scotland's heritage presents in understanding and addressing climate change.

STRATEGIC AIMS

The Society's Strategic Plan presents key ambitions to realise its Vision utilising its values and upholding its Royal Charter and Laws. It has been prepared in consultation with the Fellowship, staff and Trustees. The Strategic Plan will provide the framework for all that the Society does and will be kept under review to act on opportunities and changes to the context within which the Society operates.

Supporting research to enhance understanding and to promote further enquiry

A key area of the Society's work is making research happen, actively supporting and encouraging enquiry into all areas of Scotland's heritage. This includes promoting good practice, ensuring research into Scotland's past is of the highest quality and recognised internationally.

The Society acknowledges and supports the need to ensure everyone can participate in creating knowledge. We will work to reduce barriers to participation and accessibility and foster collaboration while maintaining and growing skills and expertise in the heritage sector through facilitating and enhancing education and learning at all levels.

Greater understanding of Scotland's past, in all its forms, including aspects that might be uncomfortable or controversial, will increase its value to contemporary and future generations and help address societal division and misunderstanding. Scotland's story is still evolving and only by ensuring that a

vibrant, vigorous, and vital research ethos pertains across all communities will that story be better understood.

Promoting the dissemination of knowledge

Increasing and broadening the results of research and getting involved in how that knowledge is created are vital if Scotland's past is to be valued and cherished for future generations. The Society will look to promote Scotland's past to everyone, removing barriers to understanding and knowledge and endeavour to broaden the audience for and participation in research, increasing public benefit from that research and contributing to our well-being and to that of future generations. The Society will continue to undertake advocacy, promoting, encouraging and supporting transparency and accessibility, and providing opportunities to better understand and benefit from Scotland's past.

Encouraging and aiding the safeguarding of Scotland's heritage

Through collaboration, research and knowledge gain and exchange there will be a greater understanding of Scotland's past, which will in turn increase its value to contemporary and future generations and help safeguard Scotland's unique heritage. The Society will continue to ensure the appropriate safeguarding of Scotland's cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, as an independent charity with an active and engaged membership.

Encouraging and enhancing access to heritage in all its aspects

Our values of equity, opportunity and transparency will guide our ethos of making knowledge of Scotland's past freely accessible, actively pursuing the removal of barriers to knowledge and participation and increasing accessibility to heritage generally.

Embracing the global dimensions of Scotland's heritage

The Society will continue to develop as an independent organisation that promotes Scotland's past to the world. The Society will engage the support of our Fellows to spread quality information and bring active engagement in the understanding of Scotland's past, including aspects which may be regarded as contentious, even uncomfortable.

Providing both physical and virtual spaces to achieve our aims

The Society will continue to develop digital resources, aligning these with FAIR principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) and making them free to access publicly wherever possible. In addition, it will signpost and look to join up other high-quality sources of information on Scotland's past. Building on the digital developments during the COVID-19 pandemic the Society will look to ensure hybrid events to improve accessibility through digital solutions, and encourage greater interaction with and between Fellows, engendering the development of pioneering ideas, discussion, and evaluation as well as the creation of new visions for the role of Scotland's past.

Options for Society accommodation will be taken forward, providing for a fully independent organisation able to support greater public engagement and interaction within the heritage sector to best enable the delivery of the Society's Vision and Mission. A physical presence will emphasise the Society's independence and provide the facilities to make Scotland's past accessible.

DELIVERY

The Society will seek to achieve these aims by:

1. Acting on its own or in concert with others as appropriate
2. Providing responsive high-quality services to its Fellows both in and furth of Scotland

3. Supporting and fostering the development of its staff
4. Reaching out

The delivery of these aims over the next five years is subject to resources incorporating finance, people and physical assets; acknowledging the operating context such as the wider heritage sector in Scotland and the financial environment which may impact on subscription income, investment growth and dividends, as well as a possible reduction of central government funding.

Trustees will task the staff of the Society to deliver the Strategic Plan over the agreed timescale, with major changes during the life of the Strategic Plan being agreed by Council and integrated into revised versions.

Actions: Supporting research to enhance understanding and to promote further enquiry

Lead and develop the *Scottish Archaeological Research Framework (ScARF)*. This places the Society at the heart of Scottish archaeological research and will help to deliver the aims of Scotland's Archaeology Strategy as well as the national Historic Environment Strategy (*Our Place in Time*), while maintaining our independence.

Increase income to support research and other grants to enable larger and more strategic initiatives, available over several years, informed by ScARF, Scotland's Archaeology Strategy and other national and local heritage strategies where appropriate.

Recognise excellence through the provision of prizes and awards for outstanding work in a voluntary or professional capacity. Collaborate where appropriate to ensure Society prizes and awards complement others in the sector.

In collaboration with others, support and facilitate training and education to underpin research on Scotland's historic environment. The Society will help to foster a new generation of individuals with appropriate skills and interest in Scotland's past.

Actions: Promoting the dissemination of knowledge

Continue to support initiatives such as Dig It! to enhance and diversify the audience interested in Scotland's past.

Develop the digital infrastructure required for hybrid events to ensure the widest possible access and inclusion.

Encourage greater collaboration between, and the utilisation of, Fellows' expertise, helping to create an enhanced sense of Fellowship and to deliver their knowledge for public benefit.

Develop and host events to increase collaboration and promote recent research to as wide an audience as possible.

Actions: Encouraging and aiding the safeguarding of Scotland's heritage

Recognise excellence through the development of appropriate awards and prizes.

Enhance advocacy to ensure efficient, transparent management of heritage assets across Scotland and increase the promotion of Scotland's past globally.

Encourage those working with Scotland's heritage in all its forms to maintain high ethical values and work with others to ensure Scotland's heritage laws and policies are fit for purpose.

Ensure that Society material is appropriately created, published and deposited with long-term preservation in mind and aligned with FAIR (Findability, Accessibility, Interoperability, and Reuse) principles for digital assets.

Actions: Encouraging and enhancing access to heritage in all its aspects

Develop further free digital access to Society publications.

Expand online publications such as *SAIR* to include open access history (or other branch of antiquarian studies) articles of any length; rename the resource *Scottish Historical and Archaeological Internet Reports (SHAIR)* or similar, with attendant resourcing for both the format changes and the marketing investment.

Develop and enhance ScARF as appropriate, ensuring accessibility and maintaining credibility.

Advocate for and facilitate where appropriate accessibility and transparency in Scotland's heritage sector.

Action appropriate change to ensure the Society is an inclusive organisation.

Actions: Embracing the global dimensions of Scotland's heritage

Organise events and collaborations beyond Scotland.

Increase numbers of Fellows, enthusing them about what the Society does, while providing high-quality support.

Develop relationships with our global Fellowship to increase the profile of the Society and our connections with the Scottish Diaspora.

Enhance the promotion of Society collaborative initiatives globally, encouraging others through our experience and expertise.

Actions: Providing both physical and virtual spaces to achieve our aims

Obtain and equip accommodation that addresses recognised needs and helps deliver the Society's Vision and Mission.

Provide an accessible, findable focus for the research resources of the Society, including its digitised lectures and publications, with links to its collections, now owned and curated elsewhere.

Develop the digital infrastructure to enable innovative and immersive experiences of Scotland's past.