

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2022 TO 2027

## Consultation Responses Report

Society of Antiquaries  
of **Scotland**



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A statement of Council modifications to the draft Society Strategic Plan 2022-2027 in light of Fellows' responses to the consultation. It also summarises and provides the full anonymous responses made to the consultation.

Consultation draft agreed by Council 25 October 2021 and made available to Fellows for comment on 5 November 2021 with responses required by 31 January 2022.

This document was agreed by Councillors on 16 May 2022.

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## 1. BACKGROUND

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Council put the draft Strategic Plan 2022 to 2027 out for consultation on 5 November 2021 and advertised this through the Society website, eNewsletters, at the Anniversary Meeting/AGM on 30 November 2021 and at lecture meetings, with a deadline of 31 January 2022 for responses. A note was also placed in the September Newsletter to the effect it would be launched and those Fellows for whom we don't have email addresses were sent paper versions of the Strategy and the consultation.

Fellows were encouraged to return responses digitally; the draft and an online questionnaire included specific questions Councillors were particularly interested in but there was opportunity for open-ended answers or different responses through the survey-monkey online consultation or otherwise.

Councillors present here their modifications to the strategy as a result of analysing the responses to the consultation. There are also a summary and full details of the responses to the Strategic Plan 2022-2027.

## 2. RESPONSES

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The consultation received 56 responses (compared to 19 for the previous Strategic Plan 2016-2021 consultation) with the majority through the digital survey-monkey questionnaire and 7 hand-completed responses. Out of a current Fellowship of around 2,800 this represents a 2% return rate. All responses were digitized and made available for Councillors to view (see Appendix).

## 3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Any decisions based on these responses need to be considered in the context that most of the Fellowship did not respond. This suggests the majority are happy to take Councillor's advice on the future direction of the Society. Council would welcome greater engagement in future.

It was gratifying that so many respondents had read the previous Strategic Plan and found it useful, and that many found the new strategy aligned with their aspirations for the Society. Many of the response suggestions can be incorporated (some are already being undertaken) as part of the detailed annual budget activity expanding on the Actions highlighted in the Plan.

It was also gratifying to see that supporting the charitable objectives of the Society was the top-ranking benefit to Fellows; an indication of change away from a membership that only wants physical benefits (e.g. the PSAS) to one that more generally supports the work the Society does across the heritage landscape of Scotland. The Aims and Actions in the Plan adequately cover the priorities indicated by respondents regarding the importance to them of various activities and services provided by the Society. Those same responses can also help to prioritise budgets on an annual basis.

Responses regarding the journal and publishing generally will be further considered by the Managing Editor and the Editorial Advisory Board.

#### **4. COUNCILLOR'S MODIFICATIONS TO THE STRATEGY**

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Councillors considered all the responses (Appendix) and agreed a series of specific recommendations suggested by the Director.

The Strategic plan document was edited by the Plain English Campaign to ensure clarity throughout.

No major changes are made to the Vision, Mission Statement, Values, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Environment statements other than minor edits for clarity.

Similarly a small change under Fellowship makes explicit that the Fellowship is considered to provide significant contributions beyond their subscriptions, giving the Society strength.

A more explicit reference to formal and informal education is included in the Actions to accommodate the promotion of Scotland's past to the younger school age generation, best provided within a context of collaboration given the Society's relative lack of experience in this specific area.

Under Strategic Aims it is noted that greater detail on activities, budget and performance indicators that cannot be included in a Strategic Plan will be provided through annual Budgets and Activity Plans.

In general, mentions of Trustees are changed to Councillors to remove any confusion. It is stated under Governance that Councillors are Trustees of the Society.

A decision on whether to number the document sections/paragraphs will be made on the advice of a designer. The Strategic Plan 2022-2027 will be made public and available on our website and a link to the Strategy will be provided to all prospective and new Fellows.

The Strategic Plan 2022-2027 will be implemented from 1 June 2022, completing on 31 May 2027. It is reassessed on at least a biannual basis.

##### ***Publications***

There is clearly support for digital dissemination of the PSAS, although the small number of responses are split on whether there should be an embargo period of two years. There is also still support, albeit weaker, for hardcopy publication, but again this is split in terms of importance to individuals (for example Fellows placed hardcopy as either first (23%) or last (35%) in sequence when asked about the importance of Society activities in consultation Question 6).

Councillors recognise the need to clearly separate two different issues going forward: 1) that of receiving hardcopy PSAS and 2) open access to the digital version. Whatever the speed of moving PSAS to open access, the provision of hardcopy should be considered separately, making transparent both the costs, which are increasing at rates beyond even the currently high inflation not seen since 1992, and potential options for covering those costs.

An outcome of Scotland's Archaeology Strategy consultation on open access conducted around the same time as this consultation will be a series of public seminars/workshops to provide information on

how open access works, where funding for authors might be found, and discussion on the options among Scottish publishers. The Society will participate and lead on those where appropriate.

The Society will consider moving PSAS to open access in Council.

Councillors would like to thank all the Fellows who took the time to respond to the consultation. Their responses have made for a better Strategic Plan and many suggestions can be built into annual budgeting and activity plans that follow the broader strategic aims and objectives.

## **5. THE CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

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The responses were collected by SurveyMonkey and the report produced by the software provided the basis for analysis (including the weighting of responses etc.). Responses provided by post were transferred to the digital survey by the Director. All responses were anonymous. The appendix provides all responses in full; a summary is provided here.

### **Q1: Did you find the previous Strategic Plan 2016-2021 helpful?**

Almost 50-50 split between Yes and Don't Know, with only 3.5% saying no.

### **Q2: Can you please explain why?**

45 responses; 26 positive, 6 don't remember, 5 didn't read, 2 negative, 6 wasn't a Fellow at the time or less engaged.

Some of the reasons given for 'no' were that they couldn't remember it, but some interestingly noted they were a new Fellow suggesting they weren't aware of it, or they felt it wasn't relevant.

Of the positive responses many stated that it set out the Society's aims and objectives and at least one stated it should be required reading for new Fellows and sent to prospective Fellows.

### **Q3: To what extent do the following statements accord with your aspirations for the Society?**

There is clear support for the Vision (64% completely), Mission (64% completely), Values (72% completely) and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion statement (68% completely). The environmental statement was supported completely by 58% with 36% mostly and 6% partially, but it also had the equal lowest number of responses.

A single written response suggested the EDI statement first sentence was overdone and another noted some grammatical changes "an active heritage charity with a global membership" vs "active global heritage charity" and noted the word "solidarity" should be a Value.

### **Q4: Are the Strategic priorities appropriate?**

In general, the priorities were supported, with 40% completely and 53% mostly. Only 3% said not at all.

**Q5: Please rank the following Fellowship benefits that the Society offers in descending order of importance:**

Supporting the charitable objectives of the Society was ranked first by most and had the largest number of responses. The eNewsletter also proved popular with a weighted score although only 10% placed it first in their list. The digital PSAS just slightly edged the hardcopy in weighted score (5.92 vs 5.88) but 24% placed the hardcopy PSAS as their no 1 (second only to supporting the charitable objectives). Meeting other Fellows in person, using the post-nominals and reductions on purchases were all very similar by weighted score (5.67, 5.65 and 5.4 respectively). Meeting Fellows online, the hardcopy Newsletter and reduction on entry prices to Society events were lowest (5.13, 5.1 and 4.04 respectively).

Within a ranking system there are various ways to view the data – e.g. looking at only first preferences drops digital PSAS down to 6<sup>th</sup> while hardcopy PSAS was placed 10<sup>th</sup> by the most people.

**Q6: Please rank the following activities that the Society undertakes in descending order of importance:**

Society events are clearly the most important with a weighted score of 5.2 and 22% of responses placing them as their no 1 activity. Projects were ranked second (4.14) followed by advocacy (4.08) and Fellowship (4.02). Grants and Awards, Digital Publishing and Hardcopy Publishing were low on the list (3.83, 3.76 and 3.49 respectively).

However, Hardcopy Publishing was ranked first by 23% of respondents (followed by Events, Digital Publishing and Fellowship) while Projects, Advocacy and Grants were placed first by the lowest number of respondents. Hardcopy Publishing was also placed last by most people (35%).

**Q7: A key Strategic Aim is to improve access to knowledge by removing barriers: what actions should the Society take in this regard?**

45 responses.

A wide range of responses as might be expected, but the wider dissemination of the Society's publications and increased digital resource (16 answers), and the Society becoming more involved with the younger generation (school age) (8 answers) are two that stand out. An increased more general awareness of the Society and its work beyond our usual audience, and beyond Scotland, is also clear (10 answers).

Some answers suggested additional collaboration (8 in general; 4 suggesting increasing free or cheaper access to existing digital resources outside the Society).

One mentioned lower or free subscriptions for unwaged or low-income members.

Several felt the Society was doing well in this area already, and others asked for more definition of the perceived barriers.

**Q8: Are the Actions proposed for delivery of the Strategic Plan appropriate?**

The actions are generally supported with 45% saying completely and 47% saying mostly. None said not at all.

**Q9: If not why not?**

22 responses.

Generally responses were quite specific and individual and 8 of them were “not applicable” or no ideas.

**Q10: Assuming extra capacity can be identified, which domains (apart from Scottish archaeology) should be prioritised for projects by Society staff?**

There was a clear preference for Scottish history (87% priority) and Architectural history (82% priority), with genealogy last as a priority (20%) and most as not a priority (72%).

In the “other” category however there are at least two of 12 additional suggestion that mention genealogy as an interest.

Twelve other suggestions are listed in the appendix.

**Q11: The Society has been running a series of hybrid (a mix of in-person and digital) events. What might be done to improve their delivery?**

40 responses.

Excluding don't knows (5 responses) the majority are generally positive with requests to continue the digital provision, hybrid where necessary (21 responses), with some asking for improvements in both technology (5 responses) and presentation (8 responses). The latter include some calls for greater interactivity with the audience (presumably beyond the text chat function) (3 responses).

Overall the responses are positive and note that quality is improving.

**Q12: What should the Society do to increase inclusivity and the diversity of the Fellowship?**

45 responses.

A wide range of answers including two responses that queried whether or what the problem was, and a few who stated they were unsure, not applicable or no comment (4 responses). Several suggested a no change policy (11 responses) some of whom didn't think there were barriers. One was concerned by entrance requirements.

Engaging younger people was suggested by a few, either through school visits, targeting students or youth outreach for example (7 responses) and early career archaeologists (1 response).

Reduced subscriptions for low income or unwaged (1 response), Fellowship generally (1 response), and 1-year free membership to lecturers and teachers was also suggested (1 response).

Several suggested engaging a wider audience through various means including leaflets (1 response), asking Fellows to help (4 responses), doing more about areas outside Edinburgh “or the east” (1 response), promotion to medieval studies programmes in Japan (1 response), more activity on social media (1 response), adding genealogy to areas of interest (1 response), a wider range of speakers (1 response), greater collaboration (3 responses) and Gaelic language material (1 response).

Several mention setting up specific focus or working groups (3 response).

**Q13: Councillors would like to know the Fellowship’s views on the future strategy for its flagship journal *The Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*. Please prioritise the options that you prefer:**

On weighted scores B (disseminate digitally with a two-year embargo) narrowly pips A (disseminate digitally open access) by 4.35 to 4.17. Both had 12 responses placing them as their first choice. Next favourite was A plus free distribution of the hardcopy to all Fellows who want it, but only marginally against B plus free hardcopy (3.68 and 3.67 respectively). A plus an extra cost for hardcopy was next with B plus extra cost last.

Looking at numbers who placed an option first, 33% stated A and 30% B. 25% placed B plus hardcopy at extra cost least favourite.

**Q14: Would you like to be involved in delivering the Strategic Plan 2022-2027?**

Many respondents (46%) don’t want to be involved reflecting the relatively passive nature of Fellowship for some. However, 25% did want to be involved and 27% didn’t know.

**Q15: If so, how would you like to be involved?**

25 responses.

Several then said no, n/a or similar (9 responses).

Others offered general support (7 responses), of which 5 mentioned using smaller groupings. One offered establishing a marquee at various gatherings in Australia.

Several offered their specific skills/expertise in school administration (1 response), charity governance (1 response), communication and organisation (1 response), publications, exhibits and events (1 response), and the diaspora in USA, Australia and NZ (1 response).

**Q16: Do you have any other comments?**

24 responses, of which 4 were no, and several were congratulatory or thankful (5 responses).

Two responses suggested they were not happy with the Plan, and one suggested the Society should change its name because it is for archaeologists.

One mentioned continuing physical access to the library including borrowing and another emphasised the importance of the hardcopy PSAS reiterating the need for an embargo on wider dissemination. One particularly supported the proposal to move SAIR to SHAIR.

One response asked for more information on grants awarded and their results, suggesting they are added to the PSAS. Another in the USA asked to be kept more up to date with Society activity, suggesting a “What’s going on right now” report would keep distant Fellows involved, as well as more virtual events and interaction generally. A further response also asked how distant Fellows can help, as well as locate other Fellows locally and have a better understanding of “what resources the society has to offer for our research”.

One response suggested a laser focus on “high quality research, scholarship and fellowship”.

One response had some suggestions regarding rewording the Vision to e.g. “Everyone has the opportunity to research, share, enjoy and protect Scotland’s past, home and abroad.” They also had some other more grammatical points regarding the achievability of the aims and objectives. This same respondent also asked how the Society will measure success.

Another response also had some detailed grammatical points and noted the challenge of ensuring feedback is assimilated into the final document. It also noted more could be said regarding archaeology and the environment in the Environment statement and queried how to measure success regarding greater diversity and inclusion without a baseline.

One respondent focused on ScARF as a key strategic aim, suggesting Dig It! pivot to focus on promoting and disseminating ScARF. It also mentioned the staff being the Society’s greatest asset. Another also specifically supported ScARF.

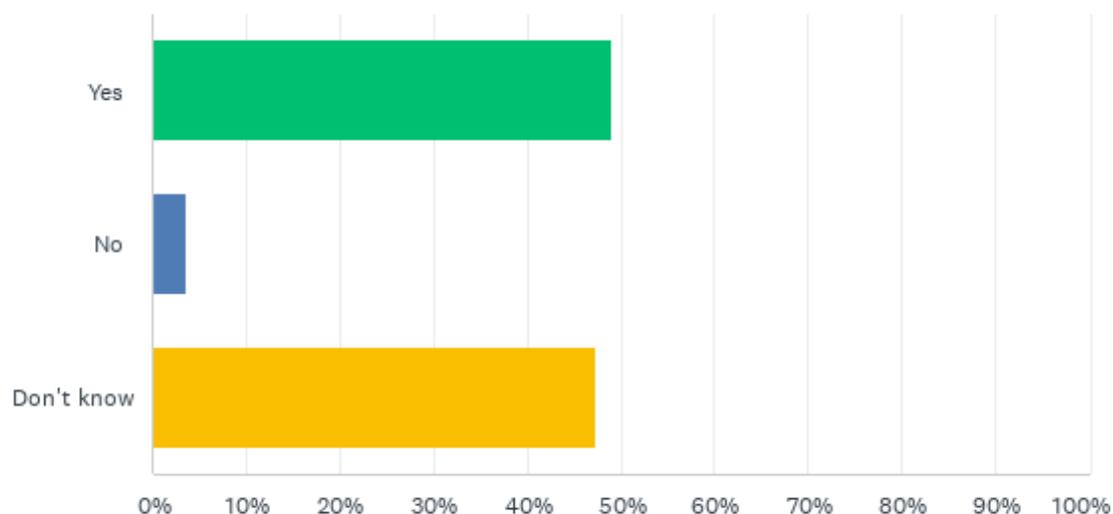
Two responses highlighted the need for resource/revenue to deliver the Plan.

## 6. APPENDIX

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### All responses in full

#### Q1: Did you find the previous Strategic Plan 2016-2021 helpful?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	49.09%	27
No	3.64%	2
Don't know	47.27%	26
Total Respondents: 55		

#### Q2: Can you please explain why?

Cannot remember what was in previous plan

Put Society's objectives together

Understanding of aims

Interesting

I don't remember it!

Don't remember being aware of it!

Useful summary of society aims and activities

It enabled me as a Fellow to be aware of and informed about the Society's plans

I don't think I read it

Not read it

Realistic goals, well considered.

Wasn't really a strategic plan but more an expanded mission statement. Doesn't need to be so wordy in a meaningless way using such standard phrases, whilst not explaining the big issues such as finance.

I'm a relatively new member.

I became a Fellow in 2020.

I have just become a fellow

Very vague

I am a new fellow and it was an excellent and informative introduction to the Society. All new fellows should read it and it should be sent to prospective fellows in advance of their election.

I wasn't familiar with it.

Provides basis of comparing future directions with past.

I was not aware of its existence. Possibly my interactions with the Society were less regular during that time

The plan explained aims and goals of the Society.

I don't recall reading it.

It covers every conceivable situation. It is a very comprehensive plan.

It sets out the context that the society is operating in and what it intended to do

It explained in detail the Society's proposals for the quinquennium.

Insight into the future aims and attitudes of the society clearly outlined in sufficient detail for an overview

Useful to see such things written down

Was not as engaged with the Society then

I can't remember.

Good to set out forward aspirations for SocAntScot and what these could look like

I appreciated the aspects of inclusivity included in it - making heritage for all, accessible to all.

Hard to follow and to be certain of the direction given the rate of change. Generally helpful.

It is clear, concise and positive in tone.

The plan sets out the operating direction of the society

Haven't seen it

I was unaware of a Strategic Plan for 2026-2021.

Always good to look back before looking forward

It was useful to read the perceived role of the Society from the viewpoint Staff and Trustees. A good example of this was the presentation of the extract from our Charter and Laws which overtly focus the Society on archaeology with an admixture of history. The draft Strategic Plan uses Antiquarian/Antiquaries/Antiquities 13 times, History/Historic/Historical 8 times and Archaeology/Archaeological only 6. In contrast Heritage appears 33 times and Past 30 times. Accepting that many of the uses of Archaeology and History (the important but secondary focus of the Society) is in titles, this shows an abandonment of these disciplinary terms for the broader, generic 'heritage' and 'past' - which dominate all sections bar the Actions. I do not support this masking of the purpose of the Society as established by Royal Charter and laid out in our Laws - we should celebrate and promote archaeological research and history. Another example is that in Resources and Delivery (before detailing Actions) the draft Strategic Plan does not consider the Fellows as an asset or resource for achieving the ambitions of our Society. We are, up to that point, the providers of monies and the target of services. The Strategic Plan reduces us to customers of the Society rather than the primary constituent element of it. Thankfully at least one of the Actions (Dig It! in their para 3) recognise that the actions of the Society can be achieved through the Fellows. The whole document reads like a corporate plan of a service delivery organisation, not a membership society of motivated, engaged antiquarians - this feels like it may reflect the viewpoint of the Trustees and the Staff of our Society.

The SoAS Strategic Plan guides the direction of the society as a whole - its management and delivery. Being a Fellow is quite a passive role (although it perhaps shouldn't be), with little need to refer to the strategic plan once agreed and adopted.

Articulates broad direction for society

I was not a Fellow when it was published and I did not read it after I became a Fellow

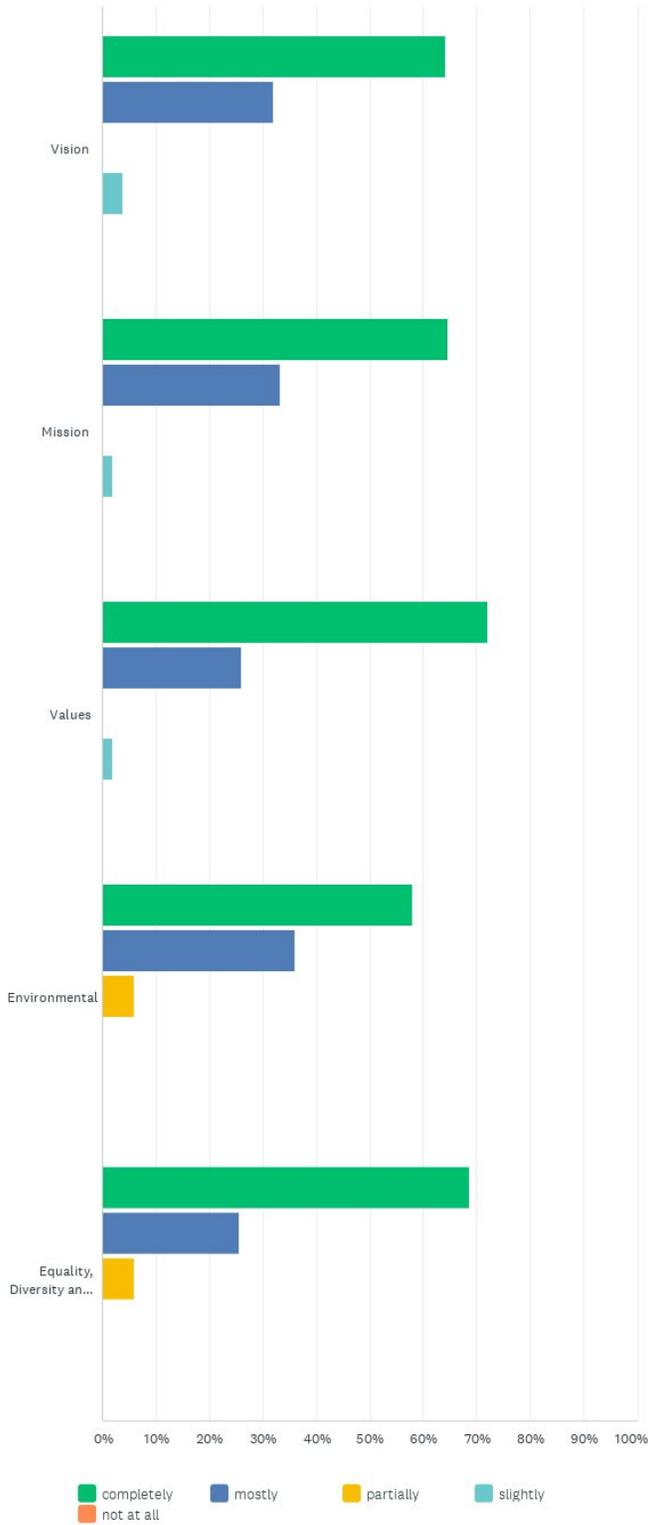
Commitment to electronic access, to digitisation, to continue field work

While the wording is mostly very general, it does make clear several of the specific activities of the Society and how these fit with other major organisations within Scotland. The document is quite short and succinct and so provides a clear guide to the activities and aims of the organisation. As a relatively new fellow this did provide an informative and yet quick guide to current activities and aims. For wider use the document is clear and provides a straightforward basis for staff, fellows, collaborating organisations and a wider audience to use to develop new projects, collaborations and structures for the benefit of the archaeology and wider heritage of Scotland.

It shows that we are now looking forward with our updated policies reflecting the expected community values.

I did not look at it.

**Q3: To what extent do the following statements accord with your aspirations for the Society:**



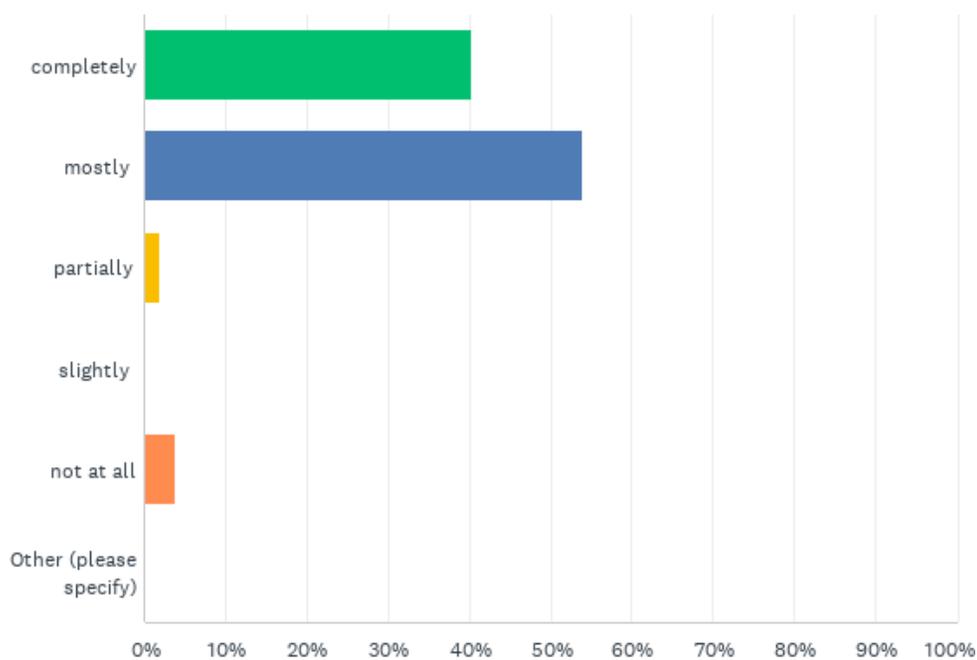
	COMPLETELY	MOSTLY	PARTIALLY	SLIGHTLY	NOT AT ALL	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Vision	64.15% 34	32.08% 17	0.00% 0	3.77% 2	0.00% 0	53	1.43
Mission	64.71% 33	33.33% 17	0.00% 0	1.96% 1	0.00% 0	51	1.39
Values	72.00% 36	26.00% 13	0.00% 0	2.00% 1	0.00% 0	50	1.32
Environmental	58.00% 29	36.00% 18	6.00% 3	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	50	1.48
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	68.63% 35	25.49% 13	5.88% 3	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	51	1.37

### Free Text Responses:

EDI - First sentence over done

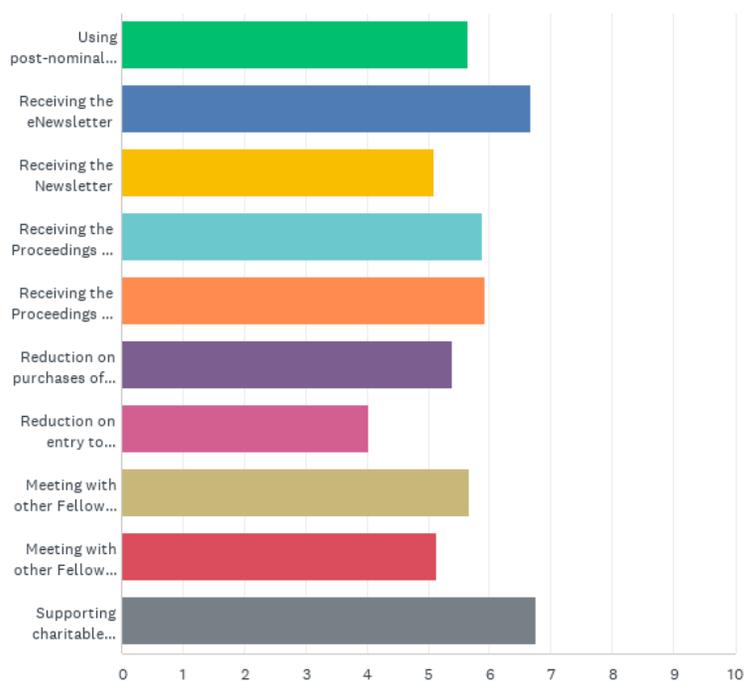
The SoAS is an active heritage charity with a global membership, not an "active global heritage charity".  
The word 'solidarity' also needs to be included within our values.

### Q4: Are the Strategic priorities appropriate?



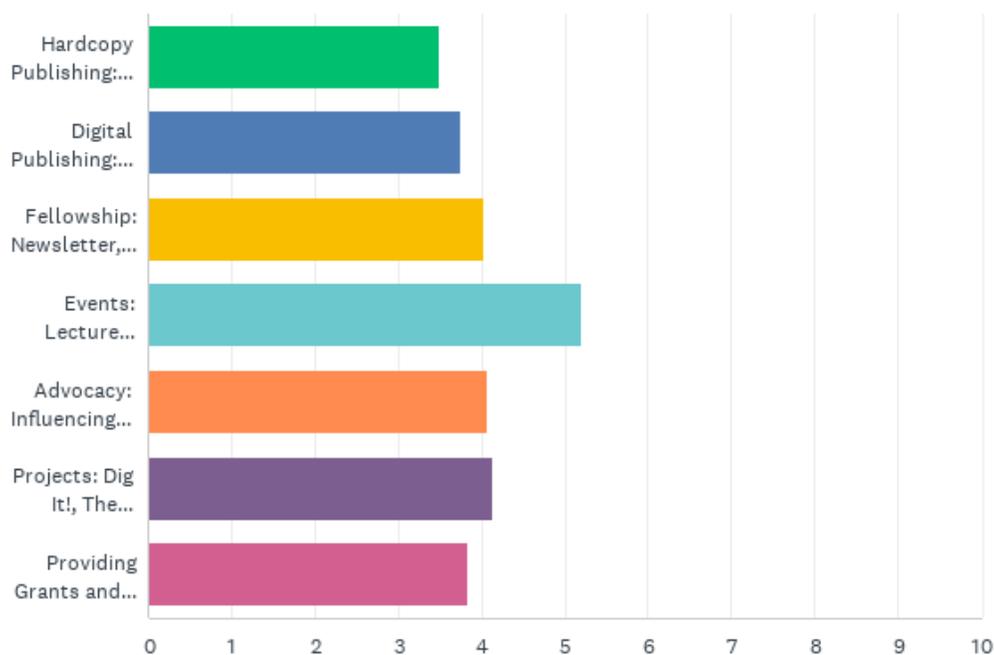
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
completely	40.38%	21
mostly	53.85%	28
partially	1.92%	1
slightly	0.00%	0
not at all	3.85%	2
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>52</b>

**Q5: Please rank the following Fellowship benefits that the Society offers in descending order of importance:**



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	TOTAL	SCORE
Supporting charitable objectives of the Society	28.85% 15	7.69% 4	13.46% 7	7.69% 4	13.46% 7	3.85% 2	0.00% 0	13.46% 7	3.85% 2	7.69% 4	52	6.75
Receiving the Proceedings - hardcopy	24.00% 12	18.00% 9	4.00% 2	2.00% 1	4.00% 2	4.00% 2	6.00% 3	10.00% 5	14.00% 7	14.00% 7	50	5.88
Meeting with other Fellows - in person	13.33% 6	13.33% 6	4.44% 2	15.56% 7	4.44% 2	8.89% 4	11.11% 5	8.89% 4	6.67% 3	13.33% 6	45	5.67
Using post-nominals FSAScot	10.87% 5	6.52% 3	10.87% 5	10.87% 5	8.70% 4	21.74% 10	8.70% 4	8.70% 4	0.00% 0	13.04% 6	46	5.65
Receiving the eNewsletter	10.42% 5	18.75% 9	14.58% 7	16.67% 8	10.42% 5	6.25% 3	10.42% 5	4.17% 2	4.17% 2	4.17% 2	48	6.67
Receiving the Proceedings - digital	8.33% 4	14.58% 7	14.58% 7	10.42% 5	12.50% 6	8.33% 4	4.17% 2	10.42% 5	6.25% 3	10.42% 5	48	5.92
Receiving the Newsletter	6.00% 3	6.00% 3	14.00% 7	12.00% 6	4.00% 2	8.00% 4	16.00% 8	10.00% 5	18.00% 9	6.00% 3	50	5.10
Meeting with other Fellows - online	6.38% 3	10.64% 5	10.64% 5	8.51% 4	8.51% 4	10.64% 5	10.64% 5	6.38% 3	14.89% 7	12.77% 6	47	5.13
Reduction on purchases of Society books and merchandise	0.00% 0	8.00% 4	12.00% 6	10.00% 5	24.00% 12	8.00% 4	16.00% 8	12.00% 6	8.00% 4	2.00% 1	50	5.40
Reduction on entry to ticketed events	0.00% 0	4.35% 2	8.70% 4	6.52% 3	6.52% 3	15.22% 7	10.87% 5	10.87% 5	21.74% 10	15.22% 7	46	4.04

**Q6: Please rank the following activities that the Society undertakes in descending order of importance:**



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	TOTAL	SCORE
Hardcopy Publishing: Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland (PSAS), Books	23.53% 12	3.92% 2	5.88% 3	11.76% 6	9.80% 5	9.80% 5	35.29% 18	51	3.49
Providing Grants and Awards	7.69% 4	13.46% 7	15.38% 8	21.15% 11	17.31% 9	9.62% 5	15.38% 8	52	3.83
Advocacy: Influencing sectoral and government policy and legislation, general advocacy	9.80% 5	17.65% 9	15.69% 8	17.65% 9	17.65% 9	9.80% 5	11.76% 6	51	4.08
Digital Publishing: PSAS, Scottish Archaeological Internet Reports (SAIR), Books	14.29% 7	12.24% 6	8.16% 4	10.20% 5	20.41% 10	24.49% 12	10.20% 5	49	3.76
Fellowship: Newsletter, e-Newsletter, Fellows' meetings online, merchandise	13.46% 7	17.31% 9	9.62% 5	17.31% 9	11.54% 6	21.15% 11	9.62% 5	52	4.02
Projects: Dig It!, The Scottish Archaeological Research Framework (ScARF)	13.73% 7	11.76% 6	25.49% 13	9.80% 5	9.80% 5	21.57% 11	7.84% 4	51	4.14
Events: Lecture Programme, Conferences, Rhind Lectures, Archaeological Research in Progress (ARP)	22.45% 11	26.53% 13	22.45% 11	12.24% 6	12.24% 6	2.04% 1	2.04% 1	49	5.20

**Q7: A key Strategic Aim is to improve access to knowledge by removing barriers: what actions should the Society take in this regard?**

Try to create more awareness of Society's work

Information

Not everyone can access digital services or meet in person

Lower or free membership for unwaged or low income.

Probably best done by collaborating with others eg HES, Archaeology Scotland, local authorities, local community groups to target and remove perceived barriers.

When considering the knowledge the Society has, or provides access to, it would probably be good to promote the Society's resources (not necessarily the Society) in places and through media that appeal to people who would normally have nothing to do with a learned society (fellows, royal charter, 'lectures' and all the other antiquarian paraphernalia)

What barriers does the Society want to remove? Who does it want to involve and inform? In general I think it should engage much more with local heritage and history groups and with young people

The Society does good work towards this goal.

More online. More in other locations

Tap into the Scots diaspora globally. My ancestors are four centuries removed from Scotland, and yet, here I am. There is an immense scale beyond Scotland.

Not sure.

Have included in the strategic plan at least a commitment to planning for engaging young people. Ideally this would be a standing committee to look at outreach and accessibility for future generations of historians and antiquarians. I am happy to be involved in this (as a schoolteacher and administrator with many years experience of research and development in these areas).

Improved cooperation with agencies, authorities and organisations (esp. societies) outside Edinburgh, both elsewhere in Scotland and beyond, esp in Scandinavia (an area of traditional interest, but which has possibly been neglected in recent years

encouraging literacy

One example - Scotlands People is an excellent genealogical resource, but of all such websites, it is the most expensive to operate. It needs to be more accessible and cheaper.

Do more online things. This can reach interest groups across Scotland and beyond. Share expertise in that way. Sessions for young people possibly.

Outreach to universities with archaeology departments globally. Remind them of the Society and the digital resources.

A big question but should include ensuring that the Society's overall digital skills are enhanced to ensure that online material meets the needs of those with sight and other impairments. The online presentation of meetings still requires improvement.

online archives, access to other online archives and cooperation with other societies and archives in GB such as in England. Much of our history is woven with England and therefore some historic documents pertaining to Scotland are found in archives to the south.

The key actions are described in the CORE values and additional statement. Wide digital dissemination of Society lectures and publications, stratified Fellowship rates, and the encouragement and funding of a wide range of research subjects are all important in this connection.

Be more welcoming to people from different backgrounds- try taking events out to housing estates and areas of social deprivation

By expanding our digital footprint and making more material available online for those wishing to access it. Perhaps even by providing links to off-site material as well.

To use the internet more, though I say this more for younger members.

The digitalisation of the records and past publications is invaluable - might it be possible to make it available to a wider field in some way

have more grants to private researchers and less towards institutions that have access to other funds.

Publicise its digital offerings

Produce apps that provide site tours and educational curricula.

More open access publications (PSAS & SAIR) & reduced priced digital alternatives to hardcopies.  
Continue with streamed/recorded lectures and events

Ensure all platforms are used and links developed with like-minded organisations. Regular awareness bulletins of new information. Much of this is done but platform effectiveness needs regular review and updating.

Encourage other organisations to provide free digital access to resources.

Firm commitment to Open Access and Open Data should be explicit in the relevant Action. Work closely with the relevant digital archives to ensure that Fellows can link from publication to archive easily. Referencing of FAIR Data is welcome.

The ability to participate in Society "events" virtually, is a great benefit to improving access to knowledge. This facility needs to be expanded and more live events with encouragement of live interaction from the membership.

Include more Gaelic language material and virtual events/resources are extremely useful for those not on the mainland

digital versions of publications including monographs, and encourage other organisations to do likewise.

Firstly this is not one of the draft Strategic Aims; I presume you mean the 'Promoting the dissemination of knowledge' Strategic Aim? Also does the use of 'key' mean you consider some Strategic Aims as more critical than others? The Actions covering ScARF, Dig It! and digital access laid out by draft Strategic Plan clearly address this Strategic Aim and their continued delivery is welcome. It would be useful if you numbered or lettered the aims and actions to assist reference btw. I would advocate that these existing Actions could be complemented with work on a portal that would assist a researcher in finding the national and regional archaeological/historical journals that bear on Scotland. Where these are not freely available in digital formats, the advocacy and support of the Society to make these so available would seem an admirable objective.

Although the publishing that the SoAS produces is of very high quality (monographs etc) and importance (SAIR, PSAS etc), it is quite academic. The SoAS should also aim to produce and make available more popular and accessible archaeological publishing, perhaps in partnership with companies like Birlinn. A republishing initiative could make some books available once again, such as the Making of Scotland series (updated and revised?).

Undertake small "outreach" projects to schools and young people

Not sure what barriers exist

Further work on diversity and inclusion

I could suggest some items if the Barriers to Knowledge were defined somewhere. What are those Barriers the Society considers are relevant?

Digital access

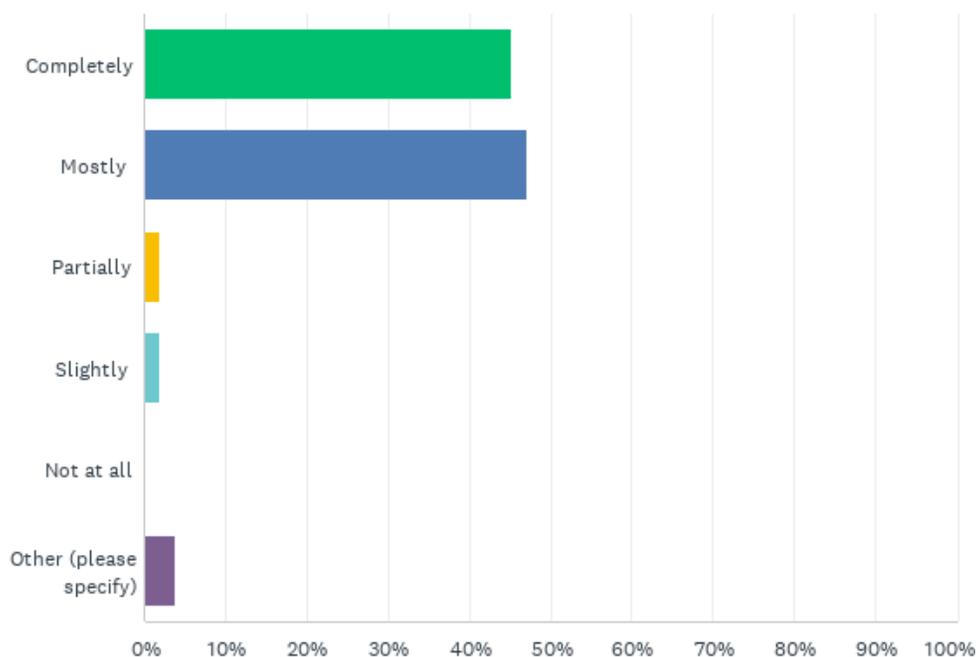
Firstly it should continue to be active in publishing and in the provision of lectures and other events. It should further develop the availability of online access to these events (without removing the face to face nature of events which is so important to Fellows and professionals) and to publications. The Society should develop further online resources available firstly to societies and other adult groups and secondly to organisations involving young people and to schools. The Society should be more active in directly supporting activities and resources in collaboration with organisations working with young people and should seek to work with education authorities in enhancing the provision for history, archaeology and more general heritage studies in schools and colleges across Scotland and in how these can contribute to the delivery of STEM content.

Perhaps more emphasis on meetings and discussions either in person or hybrid Zoom/people meetings which are minuted with aims, objectives and timeframes listed for tasks.

It is already remarkably open, providing digital access to its proceedings. The more such access it provides for the dissemination of archaeological and historical research the better.

Publicise the publication of PSAS, SAIR and Monographs more widely

**Q8: Are the Actions proposed for delivery of the Strategic Plan appropriate?**



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Completely	45.10%	23
Mostly	47.06%	24
Partially	1.96%	1
Slightly	1.96%	1
Not at all	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	3.92%	2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>51</b>

**Free Text Responses:**

To be honest, apart from the section on Environment, I find the Strategic Plan full of great terms (equity, transparency, opportunity, inclusion, diversity, participation, collaboration) and singularly lacking in specifics as to what these mean and what actions will be taken to achieve them

I had to put this, as ticking 'completely' - which was my desire - did not allow me access to the next question.

**Q9: If not why not?**

Given finances for supporting research

I terms of the action below, think that the following will detract from the core strength of the current SAIR reports (presenting archaeological excavation results of key projects). The historical component should be a separate online series. "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."

See comment under 8. I would strongly recommend taking out all these 'principles' and explaining them all under a separate heading, which will then create space under 'Actions' for saying more precisely what Actions will be taken

Personally I would like to see a lot more emphasis on history rather than archaeology and much more on the west rather than only the east

N/A

Youth outreach is not mentioned.

N/A

I'm curious about the mention of physical space and the mention of accommodation and I'm not sure what is in mind or the cost or the appropriateness of it. I don't have enough information.

Not applicable.

Not applicable.

xx

For the past decade battlefield preservation has faced challenges that have led to the degradation of sites. The society should lobby for the passage of a law similar to <https://mylearning.nps.gov/library-resources/american-battlefield-protection-act-1996/> with annual funding for the purchase of properties. Otherwise the sites will cease to exist.

Uncertainties due to the societal changes produced by the pandemic. Will need review regularly to remain effective and to adjust to those changes.

Need to address knowledge gaps

I have no suggestion to change this procedure.

n/a

With the honorable exception of Dig It!, they fail to be rooted in the mobilisation of the Fellows to deliver the Strategic Aims of the Society. They reduce Fellows to funders and service users.

Some actions are very important (new accommodation, ScARF etc), others less so (Dig it, SAIR) and others a distraction (global reach). The strategy needs focus and a new idea to celebrate. Focus on new accommodation and promoting the use of ScARF. Play to our strengths and expand the publishing arm (perhaps in collaboration or partnership). If Dig it! is to be retained, refocus away from 'pink t shirt' events / 'one off' projects to providing training and support for the wider sector. In my experience, publishing with PSAS and (especially) SAIR is painfully slow / slowly painful. A review of the society's publishing is long overdue.

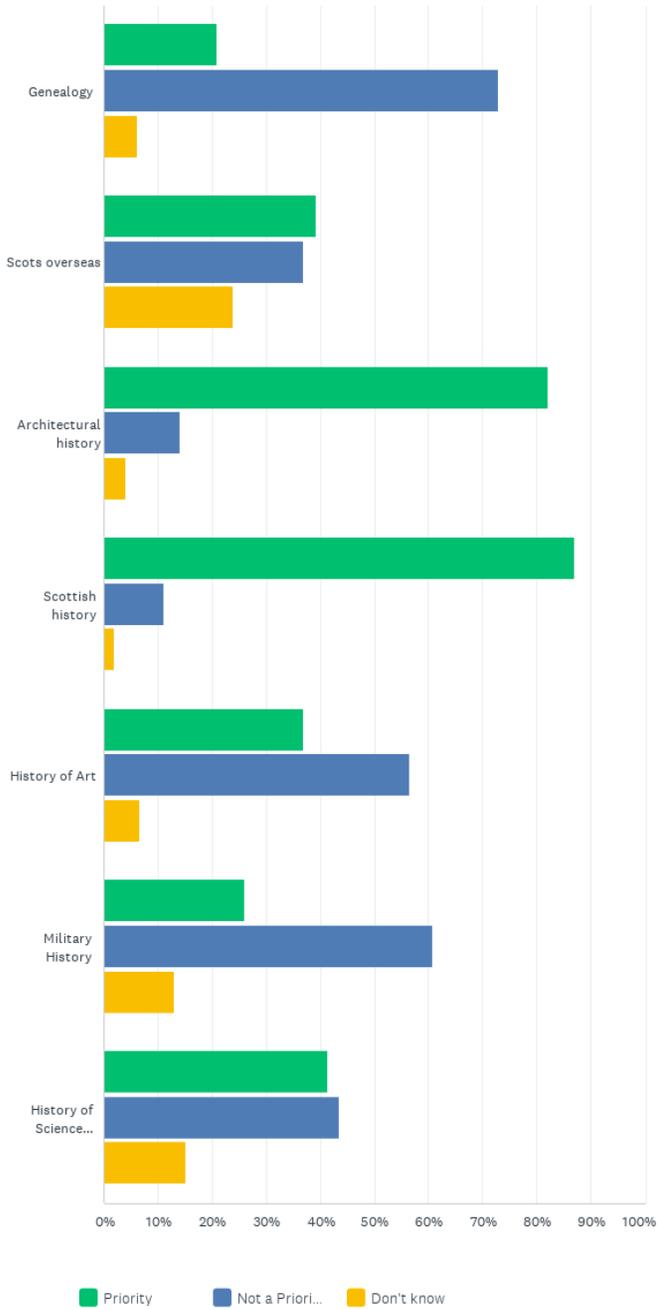
The Fellowship must be galvanised to use the study and understanding of the past in the present to address key environmental/climate challenges for society, and to prioritising support for development of historic environment based solutions for adaptation (across education, environment, places and communities which ultimately will affect our future communities wellbeing, educational abilities and prosperity)

They generally are, but I think there should be additional provision for working with and through wider educational organisations including education authorities and educational charities.

N/A

There is no mention in Plan of a continuing central role for the Proceedings. That, it seems to me, has been and should continue to be the society's lasting achievement.

**Q10: Assuming extra capacity can be identified, which domains (apart from Scottish archaeology) should be prioritised for projects by Society staff?**



	PRIORITY	NOT A PRIORITY	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Scottish history	87.04% 47	11.11% 6	1.85% 1	54	1.15
Architectural history	82.00% 41	14.00% 7	4.00% 2	50	1.22
History of Science (including Medicine)	41.30% 19	43.48% 20	15.22% 7	46	1.74
Scots overseas	39.13% 18	36.96% 17	23.91% 11	46	1.85
History of Art	36.96% 17	56.52% 26	6.52% 3	46	1.70
Military History	26.09% 12	60.87% 28	13.04% 6	46	1.87
Genealogy	20.83% 10	72.92% 35	6.25% 3	48	1.85

#### Free Text Responses:

Scottish inventions and discoveries

Genealogy and Scots overseas are of interest

Scottish environmental history/palaeoecology

Genealogy and overseas brings in money. Youth outreach vital

Maritime - major aspect of Scottish tradition

preserving libraries and archives

History of Scottish Music

Relationship between Scottish archaeology, history & people and colonialism

What!? Deviate from archaeology and you will loose this Fellow.

Heritage as a tool for climate adaptation and environmental sustainability in Scotland

Public awareness of legislation and policy related to cultural heritage

Scottish material culture and heritage

**Q11: The Society has been running a series of hybrid (a mix of in-person and digital) events. What might be done to improve their delivery?**

Continue

Society has done extremely well in very difficult circumstances - everyone has been on a steep learning curve. Just keep learning and keep up with latest technological developments if possible.

Don't know

Digital events should be continued, all made available on YouTube

They are great! If possible to keep the hybrid format--much appreciated.

More digital - less in person

This has been a good evolution, and realistically, the only way to regularly connect with overseas members.

Not sure.

If hybrid, presenters need to be aware and prepare for the online audience. As a teacher having to deal with COVID, I was fully online for 12 months - this was manageable. Much harder was hybrid - having some present and some online. The automatic is to just talk/present to those physically present , and forget those online.

N/A

Edit the introductions before the video is made available on the website

Please do more. Just having the tech to deliver in a way that works would be a strength. Is been great over lockdown!

Continue to be mindful of the time zone differences!

I have found the Society's presentation of events online inferior to those of other organisations, to the point of being tedious in some instances. Connectivity is not consistent and both staff and members of Council sometimes appear lacking in confidence and skills in the medium.

Due to the time difference between my location (Calgary, AB Canada) and the Society I am unable to attend the events.

No experience of recent events. Continuing with digital events would support the Strategic Plan's aspirations for inclusivity and for communications among the worldwide Fellowship. However the reference in the Plan to 'reducing the number of in-person meetings' seems misguided (unless this is meant to refer to internal Society administrative meetings).

not sure, sorry

Additional lectures and perhaps a You-Tube channel of past material

Make all digital, wherever possible.

Happy with them at present. Possibly an index of past events that are available (maybe this exists already?)

better publicity

More professional use of technology; IT training for those hosting meetings online; separate people to look after different functions during Zoom meetings - eg a chairman, someone to moderate the Chat functions and choose questions to ask of speakers

Allow a means of interactivity.

Managing time zones with a worldwide membership is difficult. Meetings / events should be recorded and made available to Fellows to view either for a limited time or as part of a permanent archive

Nothing that I can see, they work well and make sure they continue

Ensure presenters and chairs have training so that they address the audience and remain aware of the meeting dynamic. Care with slides and speech is also needed.

They work well.

The ones I watched have worked well

Not sure. I would encourage more live interaction with membership.

They are excellent

Continue to deliver them - that's it, make the long term commitment to their delivery and promotion.

All good.

Experience will make these better but they should be retained

Further investment in filming/simulcast/broadcast technology

The camera shots sometimes miss the slide the speaker is referring to by focusing on the speaker and not the slide being discussed (this was the case in a number of the recent Rhind lectures). Better management of cameras would assist the online events.

I think you do it pretty well - thank you

They have been improving. Certainly the provision of a visual balance between speaker and projected images (primarily powerpoint presentations and equivalent) has noticeably improved over the last 2 years. The editing could be developed further to improve this even more (there is certainly still room for improvement, too much of the time during a presentation is spent with a fixed view of the speaker only). There are times when sound quality (particularly related to the audience) is not as good as it

should be. The use of forms of microphones which can pick up audience sound effectively needs to be implemented rather than the ineffective old method of trying to rush a personal microphone to individuals. The technology is well established and suitable room microphones need to be ready for use for Q and A sessions so that sound quality is as good for these post-presentation sessions as it is now for the presentations themselves. This would incur only a relatively small cost to ensure lecture spaces and other spaces used were equipped with suitable technology.

No need for improvement at the moment. Improvements will occur over time as this new program of delivery develops. What has been delivered is excellent.

Don't know

Suitable for now

**NOTE FROM THE SOCIETY** – our events are recorded and available either through our website (<https://www.socantscot.org/resources/>) or our YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/c/SocietyofAntiquariesofScotland>

#### **Q12: What should the Society do to increase inclusivity and the diversity of the Fellowship?**

Circulate "marketing" leaflets

School visits

Given international spread of latest list for election, what is problem?

Introduce reduced fee or awards that can be applied for for free fellowship for low income or unwaged.  
Increase student membership (a more diverse community than traditional membership).

Won't happen overnight - continue to share and promote Scotland's heritage as much as possible - ask current Fellows to assist wherever/whenever possible

Promotion in new places. The contrast between the Society's formal brand and the Dig It identity is interesting and should be a clue for us.

Engage with students studying Scottish archaeology and with local practitioners (eg local history, heritage and archaeology groups and local museums)

People are interested or they are not.

More digital, more about areas outside Edinburgh or the east,

Treat everyone with respect.

Not sure.

Youth Outreach

N/A

Offer 1 yr free membership to lecturers and teachers

Encourage all Fellows actively to promote the Society.

Info sessions or a film piece or two on the web site and social media promotion of those. What you do and what resources there are. Biogas of Fellows at all stages of their careers and all sorts of areas of interest and how the soc can help with resources or the like.

Outreach could include universities with strong medieval studies programs, such as in Japan.

No comment

The Society could be more active on the relevant social media Channels of Instagram and Twitter. Showing not only what the Society has to offer to academics but that it is inclusive of all.

Key actions here are well covered in the CORE values and additional statement.

Reduce the cost of fellowship and create focus groups looking at how sexuality, race and identity are celebrated in past societies and the present day

Nothing at this time

Both appear to be satisfactory at present.

Increase its younger student audience - possibly offer some of the online lectures to university students in relevant subjects who are not yet members - a sort of taster series

focus on researchers not in institutions

Carry on current policy

Identify areas that have great appeal. If this is important, then genealogy should be added to the areas of interest, because it appeals to a broad audience.

Specific EDI committee to look at this

engage a wider range of speakers and events. Does not do too badly but more joint events might help.

I am not sure that the Society can do this effectively, we are already open to all comers.

promote marginalised aspects of society

I believe that the "community" is trying too hard in this area. Inclusivity and diversity should be a natural event and not a goal.

Gaelic language material and virtual delivery of material

target students

Recognise that working with the existing Fellows to achieve the Strategic Aims through collaborative Actions will in and of itself promote and motivate a broadening of the Fellowship. Enable Fellows to make this a movement.

Continue to be open and welcoming.

It is concerning that there is no "academic" requirement to become a Fellow and there is a strong trend towards Fellows from North America which may swamp the membership. Inclusivity and Diversity should first be directed towards Scotland and local Fellows

Dedicated taskforce to look at role of Fellowship, engagement opportunities with the Society, and wider engagement with training/skills and education

Nothing - we are already inclusive and diverse as far as I can see and there do not appear to be any barriers to whomsoever wants to become a fellow and has the appropriate qualifications/experience/interest and supporters.

I think you do pretty well. There seems to be no barrier to election to Fellowship

The Society should work more directly with organisations which work with wider community groups and with educational organisations which work with young people. This is a long term strategy to increase the visibility of the Society beyond the boundaries of the established professional community and the community of other long-committed adult participants. This would help the Society to be aware of resources it could produce which would be relevant to wider audiences and this would also allow routes in for individuals who come from backgrounds which do not traditionally provide entrants into the archaeology and heritage professions. Routes into both these professions and to a broader involvement as non-professionals and therefore (in both cases) into Fellowship within the Society as a relevant and desirable step for these individuals. There is no quick or easy solution, this needs to be a sustained long-term activity.

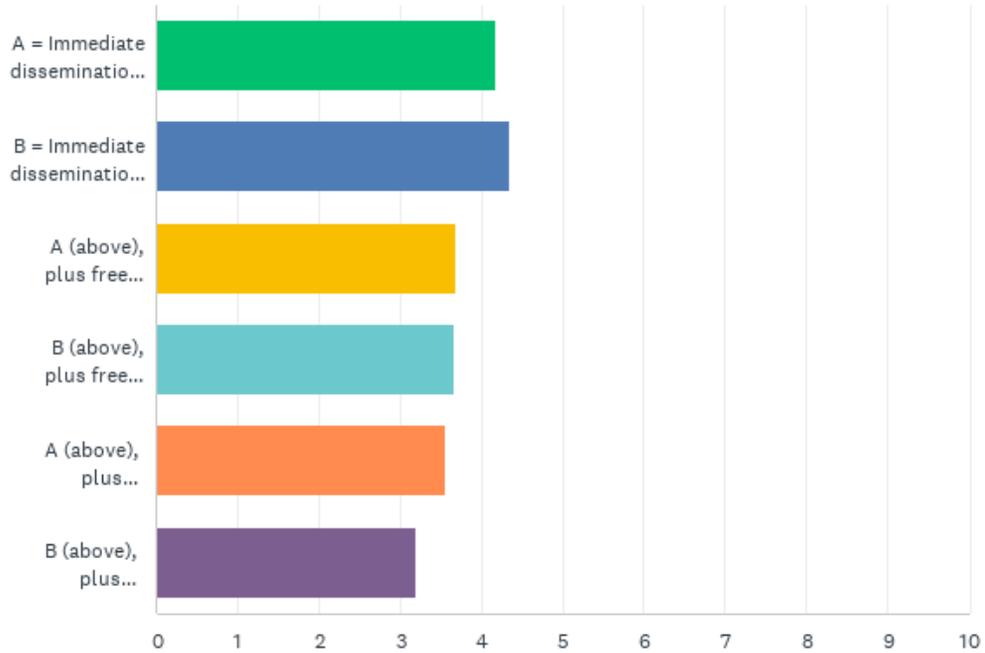
I believe that the Society is on the right track and indeed does include folk of all walks of life.

Don't know

target early career archaeologists working in archaeology companies and institutes across Scotland

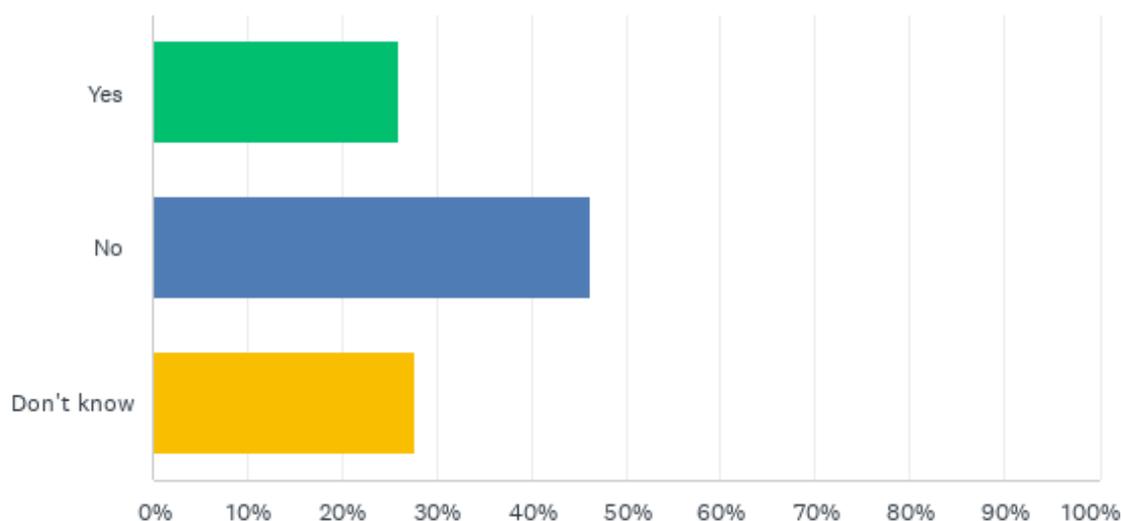
Dont know. Is it a problem?

**Q13: Councillors would like to know the Fellowship's views on the future strategy for its flagship journal The Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. Please prioritise the options that you prefer:**



	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL	SCORE
B (above), plus distribution of hardback journal to all Fellows who request it at extra cost	5.56% 2	33.33% 12	2.78% 1	16.67% 6	16.67% 6	25.00% 9	36	3.19
A = Immediate dissemination electronically to anyone in and beyond the Fellowship on publication	33.33% 12	19.44% 7	22.22% 8	2.78% 1	0.00% 0	22.22% 8	36	4.17
B (above), plus free distribution of hardback journal to all Fellows who request it	23.08% 9	12.82% 5	20.51% 8	15.38% 6	7.69% 3	20.51% 8	39	3.67
A (above), plus distribution of hardback journal to all Fellows who request it at extra cost	21.43% 9	11.90% 5	19.05% 8	9.52% 4	26.19% 11	11.90% 5	42	3.57
B = Immediate dissemination electronically to the Fellowship on publication, with a two-year embargo on access for non-Fellows	30.00% 12	27.50% 11	12.50% 5	12.50% 5	12.50% 5	5.00% 2	40	4.35
A (above), plus free distribution of hardback journal to all Fellows who request it	21.62% 8	8.11% 3	13.51% 5	32.43% 12	21.62% 8	2.70% 1	37	3.68

**Q14: Would you like to be involved in delivering the Strategic Plan 2022-2027?**



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	25.93%	14
No	46.30%	25
Don't know	27.78%	15
TOTAL		54

**Q15: If so, how would you like to be involved?**

Further information needed to be given to fellows on possibilities.

Too many other demands - I'd like to help but I'd let you down

Should all Fellows not be involved (or at least feel involved) in delivering the Plan? This raises the question of who the Plan is for. Perhaps it would help to clarify the beneficiaries of the Plan, and the role of staff and Fellows.

No

N/A

I would be happy to offer my experience as a school administrator (who has had to deal with COVID delivery of lessons/lectures) in any way, but particularly with regard to a standing committee to explore every aspect of involving younger people in the society.

N/A

I'd like to help celebrate local history and explore the past in neighbourhoods, not least because it helps foster a sense of place and belonging.

I have experience in charity governance being a past president of an accountancy membership association.

In digital attendance, focus groups. Opportunities that come up for my area of expertise perhaps.

Not applicable.

I wish that I had the time.

Where my communication and organisational skill might have a use. Being engaged in the travel and culture field i would be able to bring my extensive experience in this area to the more public facing arena of the society.

it depends on what is being offered or asked so perhaps a dialogue first?

I have over thirty years' experience in bringing history to the public in publications, exhibits and events. Please ask me.

Not sure

Involving the diaspora in the USA, Australia and NZ

Discussion and support as needed.

n/a

Through engaging with Fellows to deliver the actions.

Perhaps a series of special interest groups, to guide and influence the delivery of the actions identified?

Join task-forces or working groups

I'd happily be involved in a focus group to consider goals and priorities

Unfortunately I do not live or generally work in Scotland and the strategic priorities of the Society should be primarily (although not exclusively) delivered in Scotland by Fellows directly connected to communities in Scotland.

Attending local meetings of the Society to deliver the Strategic Plan. Promoting the Society and its Strategic plan at various Scottish Cultural events, ie Scots of Victoria and Melbourne Scots and establishing a marque presence at various gatherings.

**Q16: Do you have any other comments?**

Maybe missed it but could not see any reference to continuing physical library access including borrowing

Society does a good job and circulates good information

The journal hard copy is important and should not be stopped. Wide dissemination of articles online is also important, but there should be an embargo period for wide circulation because of the membership fee. Would be good to have further information about grants awarded and the project activities/results. Could this be added as a section to the journal?

This is an excellent strategic plan and should be workable by Board and staff. Two techy/pedantic points: 1. The Vision isn't really a vision but a statement of belief. I would expect a vision to state an outcome of the plan, eg Everyone has the opportunity to research, share, enjoy and protect Scotland's past, home and abroad. 2. Be a bit wary of over-writing: do a global search on 'all' and 'everyone' and make sure you haven't set an unachievable objective - eg where one sulky taxi driver in Guadeloupe saying she doesn't care about Scotland's past means that the plan has failed. As per my suggestion on the Vision (though you can make it better), focus on encouraging and allowing/enabling/facilitating people to engage with Scotland's past, and make sure that you're not committing to making them engage with it even though they'd rather watch reality TV. I bet you've worked out who your anonymous consultee is now. Finally, how will you measure success?

I am sorry to say that I was very disappointed after reading the draft Strategic Plan. I expected something less general, and more specific about the priorities and tasks of the Society in coming years, and what it wanted to see achieved at the end of the Plan period. The only section that seemed to be clear is the one on Environment. I would very much like to see a redrafted Plan with clearer statements about goals and actions in the field of Scottish archaeology.

I think it needs a serious review

Focusing on high quality research, scholarship and fellowship is the essence of this organization. Anything else would be a distraction.

Keep up the good work.

No

Thanks for inviting us to comment

Was agreeably suprised by the concise nature and general clarity of language of the Strategic Plan. Resources will be key, and it remains to be seen how far appropriate concrete actions can be taken to achieve the aims.

It would be helpful for those of us located at a distance to have a better understanding of what resources the society has to offer for our research and who we may contact. In addition to how we may help from afar. Also - to find if we have members in our area so we may support and meet up locally.

I particularly support the Plan's aspiration for the provision of further support and resources for ScARF and SAIR and the proposal to convert the latter to SHAIR (embracing historical as well as purely archaeological subjects).

No.

Finding revenue streams is essential. Without them the best ideas are merely dreams.

no

As a Fellow in the United States I would like to see more interaction within this community. Online virtual events directed to this group would help with increasing membership. I believe a report like "What's going on right now" would go a long way to keeping the remote membership involved.

An excellent strategy, and a pain-free consultation mechanism. Thank you!

It is excellent that the Trustees and Staff are circulating this draft for discussion. The challenge is in ensuring that feedback received is assimilated into the final version of this document. My other comments would be: In Delivery Bullet Point 2, I didn't know what 'furth' meant. I thought the Environment section could have worked harder to explore the role of archaeology in considering how we can understand human adaptation to natural climate change. This sections also fails to identify archaeological sites and landscapes as a fragile and non-renewable part of our environment. The usage of 'enquire' rather than 'inquire' intrigued me, I appreciate they are to a degree interchangeable but I thought modern usage weighted 'inquire' to the investigation of something? In Q13 you use 'Councillors', is this the same as Trustees? In Q12 you ask how we increase Diversity and Inclusion - though I could see no data on what metrics you are considering or how this compares (say) to these metrics within the population of Scotland. How can you target a means to improve D&I went you haven't characterised the current position nor where you wish to get to? Finally, I did laugh out loud on Q10 when you state 'apart from Scottish Archaeology' given the draft Strategic Plan seems to try to avoid the A-word as much as humanly possible.

The society's staff are its greatest asset, followed by its membership and history. We must work to our collective strengths to deliver our mission statement and secure a legacy for future Fellows. As such, actions should be defined that deliver on the four points identified in the 'Delivery' section. For example, would the staff and resource currently committed to Dig It be more usefully redirected to supporting the 'dissemination of knowledge' (second action) resulting from ScARF, "supporting and facilitating training and education to underpin research" (the first action)? The legacy of the 2020s should be simple: demonstrating the value of ScARF and the research framework process in terms of Scotland's Archaeology Strategy and in line with supra-national initiatives (such as Boyne-to-Brodgar) and developing local/regional/thematic archaeology strategies.

No

The strategic plan is, as far as it goes, a very good guide to actions and approaches. There are a limited numbers of areas where it should be expanded or added to. These are important and should not need to extend the commitment/resource requirement on the Society very much if they are integrated well with current activities and approaches.

Overall, the Strategic plan is excellent and in plain English for all to read and understand. Well done to the team at the Society. It reflects community and Society expectations.

The Society is no longer a society of antiquaries. It is a society for archaeologists and might as well change its name