

BEFS

BUILT ENVIRONMENT
FORUM SCOTLAND

Advocacy Toolkit

HOW TO BECOME AN ADVOCATE
FOR THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT



BUILT ENVIRONMENT ADVOCACY

Scotland's built environment plays a vital role in the lives of individuals and communities across Scotland. It is the physical evidence of human activity and connects people with places and with the traditions, stories and memories linked to those places. Scotland is renowned for the quality and diversity of its built environment, which represents one of our most valuable assets.

Although you already know this, do the people who are making decisions about the future of your organisation or the sector, more generally?

Tough budgetary decisions are being made by local authorities and public bodies across Scotland. Advocacy involves you taking control of this situation by trying to influence the outcomes of these decisions. It's important to make sure people are aware of the impact of your work and that of your organisation, and to ensure policymakers and stakeholders are vocal in their support for you and the built environment.

START ADVOCATING FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Start advocating for the built environment by raising the profile of your organisation and demonstrating how your work makes a difference to people's lives. Think about how to link your advocacy to Scottish Government agendas and how your work effects other areas of social and economic policy, such as health and wellbeing, equality and diversity, tourism and development, skills and education, to name but a few.

Once you have developed some short, positive messages around the impact the built environment has in a general sense, you will need to move on to communicating directly with more specific audiences. Target those that are most likely to be able to influence on your behalf and policymakers who are making decisions that will affect the future of your organisation; as well as key stakeholders, friends, members and the media.

BEFS ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

BEFS has developed this advocacy toolkit to help you and your members to achieve this. The toolkit is aimed at organisations working in the built environment in Scotland, but may also be of use to individuals. It gives you tips and ideas on how to make the case for the built environment with your local politicians and councillors as well as raising the profile of your own work. It is designed to give you the information you need to confidently speak up for your organisation and your local built environment.

The toolkit is a responsive document, which we are updating regularly with new content and advice from experienced campaigners and experts in the sector.

If there is something that you feel you would like included, do get in touch with us at info@befso.org.uk.

BEFS gratefully acknowledges the financial support of
Historic Environment Scotland.



HISTORIC
ENVIRONMENT
SCOTLAND

ÀRAINNEACHD
EACHDRAIDHEIL
ALBA

Scottish Charity No. SC 034488 | Company No. 250970

ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

BEFS' advocacy toolkit enables everyone to become an advocate for the built environment. It gives you tips and ideas on how to engage with your local politicians and councillors as well as raising the profile of your own work and organisation. It provides practical information and evidence for you to use in spreading the message about the impact of the built environment. It also identifies information, facts and research that will be of potential interest to your local politicians and councillors and will help you make your case for the built environment.

Start by reading "How to become an advocate" and then follow the advice in the different sections to begin your own advocacy. More sections and tips will be added, so remember to keep checking back.



Kenny Davis, one of the young people who successfully advocated for the Vennie skate park in Livingston.

⇒ **HOW TO BECOME AN
ADVOCATE**

⇒ **FINDING YOUR LOCAL COUNCILLORS MSPS & MPS**

⇒ **ENGAGING WITH YOUR LOCAL POLITICIANS & COUNCILLORS**

⇒ **SHARING YOUR EXPERIENCES**

⇒ **KEY MESSAGES**

⇒ **FACTS & FIGURES**



HOW TO BECOME AN ADVOCATE

BEFS advocacy toolkit enables everyone to become an advocate for the built environment.

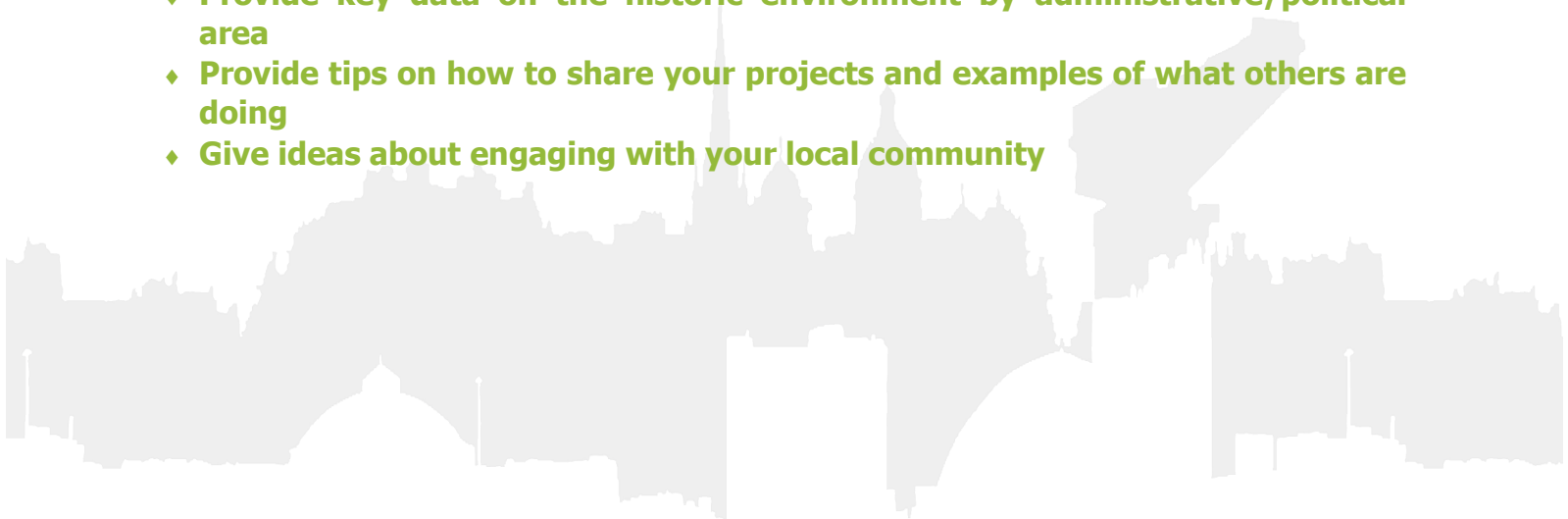
WHAT YOU CAN DO

You can become an advocate for the built environment simply by having discussions with your local politicians and councillors about your experiences and why the built environment is important to you. Encourage them to become a champion for the historic and contemporary environment in the local area. You can also find out about the evidence for the impact our built environment has more widely and use this information in your conversations.

The more people who engage with politicians to make the case for the built environment, the more likely it is that it will continue to be recognised, promoted, supported and maintained by Scotland's local and national governments. BEFS toolkit provides tips on how to engage in these conversations and what to say; by following the toolkit and sharing your experiences you can be part of the network working to promote our built environment.

The toolkit will

- ◆ **Help you find your local MSPs, MPs and Councillors and how to contact them**
- ◆ **Give tips on arranging meetings with politicians and inviting them to an event**
- ◆ **Give you key evidence and data on the impact of the historic environment**
- ◆ **Provide key data on the historic environment by administrative/political area**
- ◆ **Provide tips on how to share your projects and examples of what others are doing**
- ◆ **Give ideas about engaging with your local community**



FINDING YOUR LOCAL COUNCILLORS MSPs & MPs

The quickest way to find out who your local elected representatives are, is on the [Write to Them](#) website. It is worth making sure that you contact the person who is best placed to help you, so spend a little time reading the [Who Should I Contact](#) section. Once you have noted their names it is easy to find their contact details.

COUNCILLORS

There are 32 directly elected councils in Scotland and 1,223 elected councillors. Councillors are involved in making local budgetary decisions, can influence local planning decisions and decisions regarding local service provision. You can find out who represents your area by searching on your local council website, a list of which you will find on the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) website: <https://www.cosla.gov.uk/councils>



SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

Each person in Scotland is represented by eight Members of Scottish Parliament (MSPs); one for their constituency and seven for the larger region in which they live. MSPs can effect national decision-making and prove instrumental in awareness raising in their constituencies. Depending on your event, you can choose to invite MSPs from a particular political party, those that you've heard of locally or those that you know have a keen interest in a particular subject.

To find your MSPs, go to: www.scottish.parliament.uk/msps.aspx. By entering your postcode, you will get a list of all the MSPs in your area, including their email addresses, as well as their biographies, which mention any particular interests and membership of cross-party groups. You can also use a map search: www.scottish.parliament.uk/msps/constituency-maps.aspx

UK PARLIAMENT

The United Kingdom is currently divided into 650 parliamentary constituencies, each of which is represented by one Member of Parliament (MP) in the House of Commons. There are 59 constituencies in Scotland.

To find your MPs (Scottish Constituencies), go to: www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/mps/?search_term=Scotland. You can also narrow down the search by entering your postcode.

ENGAGING WITH YOUR LOCAL POLITICIANS

Once you've researched who your Councillors, MSPs and MPs are, you can choose which form of contact is the most appropriate for you and your organisation:

- ⇒ **Write to them**
- ⇒ **Attend a surgery**
- ⇒ **Follow them on social media**
- ⇒ **Invite them to an event**

In total you will be represented by around 12 politicians and councillors. If you don't have time to contact them all, start with one or two and see what kind of responses you get. When deciding who to contact have a look at their online presence to find out who might be interested in your work.

Politicians have many demands on their time and attention, remember to always be courteous and friendly.



Have a positive message about the impact of the historic environment on people and communities

WRITE TO THEM OR ATTEND A SURGERY

Contact details and surgery times are all available online. For councillors, a google search of their name should take you to the relevant page. For MSPs you can find contact details and links to individual websites through the biography pages on the [Scottish Parliament's website](#) and for MPs from the biography pages on the [UK Parliament website](#).

When writing to or meeting politicians, the first step is to focus on the reason why you are approaching them: it could be to inform them about your organisation and to highlight the way the organisation works with the local community. It could also be to focus on a particular cause or issue. **Have a positive message, be proactive and prepared.** Prioritise what you would like them to know and think of including the following information:

- ◆ Describe what the organisation does and what its mission and aims are
- ◆ How many people the organisation employs / how many volunteers
- ◆ How many people it supports through its activities. Who are these stakeholders?
- ◆ How many people engage with the organisation through its activities / projects
- ◆ Where does the financial support for the organisation come from? What percentage comes from each source? You should also be able to provide the percentage that comes from funding and commercial activities
- ◆ Explain the impact your work has and how the historic environment as a whole has an impact in Scotland – use the section on Key Messages and Facts & Figures to make your case
- ◆ Politicians are mainly concerned with their constituents, so offer a positive message, highlighting the impact of the historic environment on people and communities
- ◆ Perhaps you have some success stories, examples of your activities you could share with them – for this section, it is worth researching your MSPs' or councillors' particular interests, to give them examples that would strongly resonate with them.
- ◆ Ask them about their views on the value of the historic environment and how they can help support it in Scotland.

ENGAGING WITH YOUR LOCAL POLITICIANS

CONTINUED

SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Following or messaging your local politicians on social media is a relatively simple way of engaging with them in a more informal way and making them aware of your work. A simple google search of their name will usually point you to their Twitter and Facebook pages.

You can find MSP Twitter accounts by visiting the biography pages on the [Scottish Parliament's website](#) or from their [Twitter list](#).

Twitter accounts for MPs are available from the biography pages on the [UK Parliament website](#) or from UK MPs on Twitter [@UKMPTweets](#).

INVITE A LOCAL POLITICIAN TO YOUR EVENT

A forthcoming event is a good opportunity to engage with your national and local government representatives. Research what their interests are to see how well your event and your organisation's activities fit with what they support – make sure that you try to tie into those interests as that will make your event essential for them to attend. Let them know if there are likely to be media and photo call opportunities at the event, which will raise both your and their profile.

Even if they aren't able to attend the first time you invite them, making them aware of what is happening in their area is an important part of highlighting the impact that the historic environment has.

Don't underestimate the importance of planning ahead – even if your event is extremely relevant, your Councillor, MSP or MP will need to fit it into their diaries. Try to give them as much notice as possible. A guideline notice period is that of a minimum of one month, and keep in touch as the event approaches in case they have last minute schedule changes.

Do not forget to write to them afterwards to thank them for their attendance and support.

When inviting UK Parliament MPs, it is better to contact them via their constituency office rather than Westminster. By doing so, you are more likely to speak to an assistant who will be able to help straight away.

Once you've made contact with politicians, you can share your experience with BEFS and your networks and see what others are doing.



BEFS heritage & diversity event brought together stakeholders and decision-makers from across sectors

SHARING YOUR EXPERIENCES

You may think that your event, initiative or project is quite small but you can maximise its impact and connect your activities to others through BEFS. Here is how to achieve this:

- ◆ Record the impact of your event or project – you may want to use it as a 'case study' or an interesting example of your work to further promote your activities in your local area.
- ◆ Post the photos, comments and updates from your event, project or initiative on social media – don't forget to link to [@TheBEFS](https://twitter.com/TheBEFS) and to use [#HeritageAdvocacy](https://twitter.com/HeritageAdvocacy). If the person attending your event uses Twitter, don't forget to tag them in your posts and photos.
- ◆ Take good, high-resolution photos with your MP, MSP, Councillor and use them on your website or blog.
- ◆ Submit these photos to the press with a short description of the event.
- ◆ You can also send us information to info@befs.org.uk and we'll promote your activities via BEFS website, blog, news bulletin and social media.



Here are some examples of how heritage and built environment organisations in the UK have been approaching advocacy:

- ◆ **Networked heritage** sets out 5 principles of networked heritage - how to use heritage to connect people and place: <https://medium.com/networked-heritage/5-principles-of-networked-heritage-49c8b5e0cb50#.9if064yev>
- ◆ **Local Heritage Engagement Network (LHEN)** is a project which aims to provide advice and guidance to local people who wish to champion archaeology and heritage in their local areas: new.archaeologyuk.org/lhen-toolkit
- ◆ **Heritage Alliance Advocacy Toolbox** offers a collection of documents and information useful to effectively campaign your local politicians: www.theheritagealliance.org.uk/heritage-advocacy-tool-box/
- ◆ **Museums and Galleries Scotland: Advocacy Guidance** for Scotland's Museums and Galleries, 2016: www.museumsgalleriesscotland.org.uk/advice/raising-your-profile/
- ◆ **SAVE Britain's Heritage** has been campaigning for historic buildings since its formation in 1975 by a group of architectural historians, journalists and planners: www.savebritainsheritage.org/
- ◆ **Chartered Institute for Archaeologists: Protecting Archaeological Services** – suggestions of what you can do: www.archaeologists.net/advocacy/protectingservices
- ◆ **Buildings at Risk** Toolkit, part of an initiative funded by Historic Scotland and managed by The Architectural Heritage Fund: www.buildingsatrisk.org.uk/toolkit

KEY MESSAGES

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT MATTERS— IT CONTRIBUTES TO SCOTLAND'S ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENTAL SOCIAL & CULTURAL LIFE

Here are some key messages on the national importance of the built environment. When engaging with local politicians, don't forget to also develop messages relevant to local interests and on the impact of the built environment and your work in your local area.

VITAL TO OUR LOCAL ECONOMY & ENVIRONMENT

- ◆ The historic environment is Scotland's greatest asset contributing £2.3bn to it's economy
- ◆ It contributes to growth, development and supports tens of thousands of jobs
- ◆ Is a core driver of tourism to Scotland, attracting 14.6 million visitors per year
- ◆ Visitor spending came to £780 million in 2015, directly supporting 23,100 jobs

CONTRIBUTING TO HEALTH & WELLBEING

- ◆ The built environment gives communities a local sense of history and helps develop a sense of community well-being
- ◆ Those who visited a historic or archaeological place were over 50% more likely to report a high life satisfaction than those who did not visit
- ◆ It provides traineeships, placements and volunteering opportunities, building skills, expertise, knowledge and confidence
- ◆ Over 17100 volunteers are employed in the historic environment sector in Scotland
- ◆ Learning programmes bridge inequalities in education and health through outreach work

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT IS FOR EVERYONE

- ◆ People identify with heritage; whether it is museums, industrial heritage, castles, cathedrals, stately homes, the countryside, national parks, or historic towns and villages
- ◆ Heritage is an important axis for the understanding of different cultures and minority groups
- ◆ Built environment sites across the country connect people with their own histories, playing an important role in local and national place-making for communities and visitors alike

Research on the positive impact of heritage and the built environment:

- ◆ [Heritage Counts](#) provides trends, insights and data, such as: [Heritage and the Economy](#), [Heritage and the Environment](#), [Heritage and Society](#), and [the Value and Impact of Heritage](#)
- ◆ [Heritage for Inclusive Growth](#)
- ◆ [The Economic Impact of UK Heritage Tourism Economy](#)
- ◆ [Volunteering in the Historic Environment in Scotland](#)
- ◆ [The Value of Public Space: How High Quality Parks and Public Spaces Create Economic, Social and Environmental Value](#)
- ◆ [Combatting climate change culturally: How cultural and natural heritage can strengthen climate change adaptation](#)

FACTS & FIGURES

TOURISM

- ◆ The UK-wide Heritage industry is worth about £50 billion p.a. and supports over a million jobs (HLF 2016)
- ◆ There are 332,000 known historic environment sites in Scotland (SHEA 2018)
- ◆ The historic environment contributes in excess of £2.3 billion to Scotland's economy, with £1.9 billion in GVA (SHEA 2018)
- ◆ 15.8 million people visited historic environment attractions in 2017/18 (SHEA 2018)
- ◆ Total spend by visitors to Scotland in 2015 was £8.87 billion.
- ◆ The historic environment receives 18 Million visits per year, and these visits support a network of 66,000 jobs (SHEA 2018)
- ◆ Edinburgh as a World Heritage Site is worth between £1.2 – £1.4 billion (EWH 2016)
- ◆ 68% of visitors to Edinburgh come because of its historic vernacular, bringing an estimated expenditure of £1.16 billion p. a. (EWH 2016)

BUILDINGS

- ◆ 52% of all of Scotland's homes have disrepair to critical elements, a decrease of 5% from 2018 (SHCS 2019)
- ◆ 71% of traditionally built homes (pre-1919) have disrepair to critical elements, a decrease of 2% from 2018 (SHCS 2019)
- ◆ Traditionally dwellings constructed before 1919, make up approximately 19% of Scotland's building stock (SHCS 2019)
- ◆ In 2019, 42.9% of all dwellings failed to meet Scottish Housing Quality Standards (SHCS 2019)
- ◆ 31.8% of homes in Scotland failed the SHQS due to Energy Efficiency, while 12.2% failed due to not being Healthy, Safe and Secure properties (SHCS 2019)
- ◆ 5% of A-listed buildings are on the Buildings at Risk Register (HES 2018)
- ◆ Approximately 83% of Scotland's scheduled monuments were in optimal or satisfactory condition (SHEA 2018)
- ◆ There are 8,121 scheduled monuments in Scotland (SHEA 2018)

PARTICIPATION IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- ◆ 35% of adults in Scotland visited a historic or archaeological site in 2017 – a 7% increase since 2012 (SHEA 2018)
- ◆ Scotland's historic environment engaged over 17,100 volunteers in 2015 (Volunteering & Historic Environment 2016)
- ◆ Volunteers provide 121,000 days, an average of 7 days per volunteer to help conserve the historic environment, a contribution worth £14.7 million (Volunteering & Historic Environment 2016)
- ◆ 46% of Scotland's historic environment organisations are run entirely by volunteers (Volunteering & Historic Environment 2016)
- ◆ Historic Houses Association Scotland has 350 Friends and 220 Members (property or garden owners) (SHEA 2016)
- ◆ In 2017 there were 79 Adopt a Monument Projects, compared with 32 in 2014 (SHEA 2018)

INVESTMENT

- ◆ Historic Environment Scotland, The National Trust for Scotland and the Heritage Lottery Fund invested over £184 Million in Scotland in 2017/18 (SHEA 2018)