

Marking Scottish Apprenticeship week at the Castle



Historic Scotland is celebrating Scottish Apprenticeship Week 2012 with a demonstration of traditional building skills at Edinburgh Castle, which was launched today by the Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs, Fiona Hyslop.

As the nation's biggest employer of stonemasonry apprentices, Historic Scotland is one of 12,000 organisations and businesses which together are helping to train 34,000 people around the country.

The two-day demonstration event at Edinburgh Castle is at the start of Scottish Apprenticeship Week, which runs from May 21st to 25th, will showcase the work of apprentices to Castle visitors through demonstrations of stonemasonry and roofing.

Ms Hyslop also met the current intake of traditional building skills apprentices working with Historic Scotland.

The agency has organised the event in partnership with Construction Skills, Telford College, The National Federation

of Roofing Contractors, and the Stone Federation of Great Britain.

Ms Hyslop said: “Apprentices working in the traditional skills sector are contributing to the future of Scotland’s historic environment, which adds more than £2.3 billion to the Scottish economy annually and is a key factor in ensuring sustained economic growth.

“Traditional buildings form a major part of Scotland’s historic environment, and it is important we retain and increase the quality of these building skills to maintain our built heritage asset “.

There are over 400,000 traditionally constructed buildings in Scotland, and the repair and maintenance sector in construction is important to their survival.

Ms Hyslop added: “Historic Scotland is driving the traditional skills agenda with vigour, in recognition of the importance of sustaining these skills for existing buildings. Traditional forms of materials and construction can also tell us much about building the sustainable properties of the future. This event is a great showcase for the work that Historic Scotland and the wider sector does in caring for our traditional buildings.”

Led by Skills Development Scotland, Scottish Apprenticeship

Week features business breakfasts, networking events, skills demonstrations and management job swaps across the country. Also involved are colleges, local authorities and learning providers.

Ms Hyslop said: "Scottish Apprenticeship Week helps celebrate the valuable traditional building skills that are essential to the nation's future well-being and prosperity."

Employers can find out how they can access support to help them to employ apprentices by calling the SDS helpline on 0800 783 6000 or going [onto their website](#)

Historic Scotland's commitment to sustaining traditional buildings will be reinforced later this year at a ministerial summit to be held in Stirling.

Ms Hyslop will chair the event at Forth Valley College in Stirling, on September 25th, when key figures in the sector will discuss methods of increasing the demand for traditional building skills as part of the Scottish Government's Traditional Building Skills Strategy launched in 2011.

The Summit and the projects it will launch are aligned with Government policies on youth employment, sustainable housing, climate change and regeneration, and the wider goal of sustainable economic growth.

