

Historic Environment Scotland granted charitable status



Historic Scotland and The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS) announced they were to merge some time ago, but now they are to be combined into one body called Historic Environment Scotland (HES) and it has received charitable status from the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).

The move marks another important milestone in the establishment of the new organisation, which takes up full operational powers on October 1st, following the merging of the two organisations into a new public body.

As a new Non Departmental Public Body (NDPB) with charitable status, HES will operate with a degree of independence while still being accountable to Scottish Ministers and Parliament when it officially starts work from the 1st of October.

The move brings the new body closer in line with other national cultural bodies including the National Library of Scotland, the National Galleries of Scotland, The National Museum of Scotland and the Royal Botanic Gardens of Edinburgh. HES Chair, Jane Ryder has now written to the Convenor of the Scottish Parliament's Education and Culture Committee, MSP Stewart Maxwell, informing him of the new body's successful application to become a charity.

The functions of HES, as set out in the 2014 Historic Environment Scotland Act, support the advancement of education and the arts, heritage and culture and environmental protection or improvement, and were accepted by OSCR as the charitable purposes of the new body. The existing Historic Scotland Foundation (HSF) – set up in 2001 to accept donations, gifts and legacies for the work of Historic Scotland or any successor body – will remain a separate charity.

As the new body moves towards starting work in October, it has also recently appointed its first Chief Executive, David Middleton, who will take up his post in November, while work continues to develop the new organisation's first Corporate

Plan.

Commenting on the granting of charitable status, Jane Ryder, OBE, Chair of HES, said: "Becoming a charity affirms our core purpose and is a status that carries great responsibility. The Board is delighted our application to OSCR has been successful and that we now have charitable status. This is another key milestone as we approach 1st October when we take on our full statutory responsibilities.

"While becoming a charity enables us to contribute to the wider good of Scotland more strategically, it also provides greater opportunities to develop our new organisation overall and its varied operations in future. Such status will also hopefully provide greater opportunities for the sector and assist us in performing our role as a key player in helping to deliver Scotland's first strategy for the Historic Environment, *"Our Place in Time."*

David Middleton (CBE) was announced last month as first Chief Executive of the new body.

David joins HES from Transport Scotland, where he has served as Chief Executive since February 2009, and will take up the post from mid-November.

David has a long and established career within the public sector having joined the Scottish Office in 1978 with his senior civil service appointments including key posts in Housing Policy and Finance. He was also Head of Personnel in the Scottish Office in the lead up to Devolution in 1999.

Since 1999, his posts have covered Local Government, Europe and Agriculture, a secondment to the University of Highlands and Islands (Millennium Institute) before becoming the Director of the Scotland Office and most recently Chief Executive of Transport Scotland.