



places for people

SCOTLAND'S LIVING LANDSCAPES

TAKE A LOOK AROUND YOU

Scotland's landscapes are a national treasure...



...and they provide more than just a feast for the eyes.

Scotland's landscapes provide the context for our daily lives. Our landscapes are a major attraction for our visitors. As the setting for outdoor recreation, our landscapes are a constant source of refreshment and inspiration.

Landscapes are much more than just a scenic backdrop. Landscapes contribute to our sense of place, improve our quality of life and deliver on some of the key policy priorities for Scotland today. Well cared for landscapes contribute to:

- **Health and well-being** – attractive, accessible landscapes invite and encourage physical activity. They can delight and inspire us, significantly improving our mental well-being.
- **Community regeneration** – restoring degraded landscapes and engaging people with their local history and biodiversity builds a strong sense of place and increases feelings of

connectedness and belonging. Involving local people in decision-making about and management of their local landscapes helps build stronger communities.

- **Tourism** – the magnificence of our scenery is a key attraction for visitors. Scottish tourism is vital to our economy, contributing around £4.2 billion and employing nearly 9% of the Scottish workforce (15% in the Highlands).
- **Rural diversification** – the rural economy is strongly dependant on recreation and tourism, as is the continued diversification and growth of new businesses.



- **Economic development** - in the competitive global market for inward investment, Scotland's landscapes are a key part of the 'sales pitch' involved in promoting Scotland abroad as a desirable location, attractive to businesses and their staff.

But these benefits are entirely dependent on the quality and condition of the landscape

Take a look again around Scotland...



Not everyone looks out of their window onto scenic splendour, particularly the majority (over 80%) of us who live in Scotland's towns and cities.

Across Scotland, too many of our landscapes are degraded and despoiled:

- post-industrial landscapes provide poor settings for many urban and peri-urban communities, impacting on their well-being and quality of life
- the rural character of lowland Scotland has been eroded through the deterioration and loss of landscape features, such as dykes and hedgerows
- undeveloped, remote and wild countryside and coast has suffered from piecemeal attrition.

Landscape is the unique responsibility of no single body and its care is often overlooked and neglected.

All too often, landscape change doesn't bring enhancement and, whilst sudden transformation or extensive change of land use is often most noticeable, incremental, small-scale change can be equally significant.

We are not arguing that change should be stopped and our landscape fossilized but that we need to understand, inform and guide change so that we, and future generations, can continue to enjoy this valuable resource.



COMMON CHALLENGES

Caring for our landscapes in a rapidly-changing world is not easy. Scotland is not alone; across Europe, other countries are facing similar challenges. That is why people have worked together to develop the European Landscape Convention.

The Convention defines landscape as 'an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors'.

Landscape, therefore, encompasses all the physical elements of the environment that surrounds us – but it is people's experiences and perceptions that turn surroundings into landscape.

Five principles underpin the Convention's approach:

Our landscape

- people, from all cultures and communities, lie at the heart of the Convention's efforts for landscape, sharing an interest in, and a responsibility for, its well-being

All landscapes

- town or country, 'beautiful' or 'degraded', every landscape is part of our shared inheritance

Changing landscapes

- landscapes will continue to evolve in response to society's needs – but this change should be managed

Understanding landscapes

- better awareness and understanding of landscapes is needed, such as why landscapes are important and the benefits they provide

Tomorrow's landscapes

- an inclusive, integrated and forward-looking approach is needed to shape the landscapes of the future

The **Scottish Landscape Forum** has already begun to look at how we can use these principles in Scotland and is leading the way in the UK in the implementation of the European Landscape Convention

AGENDA FOR ACTION - what needs to happen



We need to protect and safeguard Scotland's most special landscapes. At the same time, we need to care for all landscapes and give greater attention to our degraded landscapes.

The Scottish Landscape Forum has proposed the following actions as key to taking this forward.

Leadership

- the Scottish Executive should make Scotland a landscapes leader, including drawing up a Scottish Landscape Action Plan that puts into practice the principles of the European Landscape Convention
- Scottish Ministers should draw up a national statement on landscape that sets the benchmark for Scotland's landscape work



- a review of landscape legislation should be undertaken, with consideration given as to whether we need a new Landscape Act

Communities and their landscapes

- develop local projects that involve communities in their landscapes
- provide for the full involvement of the public in drawing up landscape objectives and in landscape decision-making
- promote the importance of place and the very real benefits that good landscape supports in communities

Management and organisation

- introduce a requirement on public bodies to be more pro-active on landscape matters
- increase the breadth and depth of landscape expertise in public bodies
- establish a modern and stronger role for landscape designations, particularly National Scenic Areas

Policy

- 'landscape-proof' new and existing public policy: provide for landscape interests across all the sectors it touches
- develop a set of national and local landscape indicators against which policy can be assessed

- include effective provisions for landscape in Government policy statements and in the revised National Planning Framework

The Scottish Landscape Forum is well-placed to act as the focus for taking these steps forward.



The **Scottish Landscape Forum** is a group of public and non-governmental bodies with a common interest in the well-being, management and use of Scotland's landscape. It provides an independent platform for encouraging discussion, preparing advice and promoting action for the better care of Scotland's landscape, to ensure its diversity, quality and integrity will be maintained for future generations to enjoy.

Activity Scotland Association

Architecture & Design Scotland

Association of Scottish Community Councils

Black Environment Network

Built Environment Forum Scotland

Convention of Scottish Local Authorities

ECA School of Landscape Architecture

Greenspace Scotland

Highlands and Islands Enterprise

Homes for Scotland

Landscape Institute Scotland

National Farmers Union Scotland

Royal Town Planning Institute in Scotland

Scottish Council for Development and Industry

Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations

Scottish Enterprise

Scottish Environment Link

Scottish Environment Protection Agency

Scottish Natural Heritage

Scottish Rural Property and Business Association

Visit Scotland

Corresponding member - Communities Scotland

Observer - Forestry Commission Scotland

Observer - Historic Scotland

Observer - Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department

What you can do for Scotland's Landscapes



Elected Representatives – MSPs and local authority councillors

Think 'landscape' for new legislation, policies or developments, and embrace the key principles of the European Landscape Convention

Public Bodies – Scottish Executive and agencies

Develop tools to understand landscape values and use these tools to improve legislation, to protect the landscapes people find important and better manage the rest

Local Authorities – planners, heritage specialists, highways engineers

Develop skills to help manage changes that affect landscapes people value

Developers – housing, regeneration, utilities

Learn more about how landscapes give people a sense of place and make sure changes make places better

Users – residents and visitors

Think about what makes landscapes special to you – and find out how to make your voice heard in guiding change

All of us

Respect other people's values for landscape and speak up for your own

Working together we can realise the true potential of our landscapes to improve the health, wealth and well-being of our nation.

Key landscape links

Scottish Landscape Forum

www.snh.org.uk/strategy/landscapes/default.asp

Includes a link to 'Scotland's living landscapes – places for people', the SLF report to the Deputy Minister for Environment and Rural Development, March 2007. This is also available from your local library service.



European Landscape Convention

www.coe.int/t/e/Cultural_Co-operation/Environment/Landscape

Includes background information and reports on the European Landscape Convention.

Scottish Natural Heritage

www.snh.org.uk

Includes information on its landscape work, including National Scenic Areas; National Parks; local landscape designations; and landscape character assessment.



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