



## **Landscape: historic environment**

Landscapes provide a living history of Scotland's past. Policies and guidance shape how the historic dimension of landscape is managed.

Human activity and natural processes have shaped Scotland's landscapes over millennia. This historical dimension – known as 'time-depth' – adds to the character of the landscape and the cultural identity of Scotland.

You can see evidence of the history of our landscapes in our surroundings.

Just think about Scotland's:

- impressive built features in rural and urban areas – from standing stones to historic buildings
- country houses with gardens and designed landscapes
- field patterns and arrangement of roads and tracks

The common statement prepared by the [Strategic Historic Environment Forum](#) recognises the important links between landscape and the historic environment.

Read [Landscape and the Historic Environment - A Common Statement](#)

## Safeguarding historic landscapes

Some of Scotland's historic assets:

- have statutory protection – e.g. as listed buildings or scheduled monuments
- are included on the non-statutory [Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes](#) or [Inventory of Historic Battlefields](#)
- are in [World Heritage Sites](#), [National Parks](#), [National Nature Reserves](#) and [National Scenic Areas](#)

Find out more about our historic environment and how it's protected on the [Historic Environment Scotland website](#).

Historic Environment Scotland has carried out a programme of Historic Land-use Assessment (HLA). This complements our own [Landscape Character Assessment](#) (LCA), by providing more detailed information on the historic aspects of the landscape.

Find out about [exploring HLAmap](#) on the Historic Environment Scotland website.

Learn more about [our landscape role](#) and how it fits with that of Historic Environment Scotland.

[Understanding Historic Landscape Character](#) (Topic Paper 5) gives specific advice on HLA and Historic Landscape Character (HLC). It also describes the how HLC/HLA and LCA complement each other – and how they differ.

## NatureScot and HES Landscape Position Statement and Action Plan

Scotland's landscapes are central to our identity and wellbeing. They are at the heart of our nation and they are central to the Scottish Government aspirations contained in its key historic and natural environment policies, including the [common](#)

[statement prepared by the Scottish Historic Environment Forum.](#)

This Position Statement sets out the vision and approach of NatureScot and HES for managing change in Scotland's landscapes in more detail. As the lead heritage bodies in Scotland, our organisations have statutory roles in the conservation, management and sustainable use of our landscape resources, and in promoting their enjoyment and understanding.

The Action Plan accompanying the Position Statement has now been published. It sets out the main areas of work that both organisations have committed to starting over the next two years to deliver the aims of the Statement.

**Read the [Position Statement and Action Plan on the Historic Environment Scotland website](#), published in 2019.**