



# TRANSCRIPT...

## Heritage / climate event

Speaking for Scotland's Buildings

22 November 2021, 6.30pm

Desperate times call for desperate measures: Scotland's historic buildings and the climate emergency

	<p>Chair: <b>Peter Drummond</b> Conservation Architect, expert witness and former AHSS Chair (PD)</p> <p>The expert panel comprised:</p> <p><b>Sarah Boyack</b> MSP (SB)  <b>Christina Gaiger</b> President of the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (RIAS) (CG)  <b>Dr Moses Jenkins</b> Senior Technical Officer, Historic Environment Scotland (HES) (MJ)  <b>Euan Leitch</b> Chief Executive, Scotland's Regeneration Forum (SURF) (EL)  <b>Christina Sinclair</b> Director, Edinburgh World Heritage (EWH) (CS)</p>
<p>PD intro 03:03</p>	<p>The Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland is concerned that the Scottish Government's ambitious – well-meaning but ambitious – targets in the <i>Heat in Buildings Strategy</i> for zero carbon by 2045 could have unforeseen detrimental consequences for the character and historic importance of old buildings. Pre-1919... expert panel .....talking 'Desperate times call for desperate measures: Scotland's historic buildings and the climate emergency'. By 2045 we're going to be fully transitioned to net zero. 75% reduction in 9 years. Statutory fuel poverty targets.</p> <p>Introductions of panel members.</p>
<p>PD Q1 09:42</p>	<p><i>In view of the climate emergency, do we need to consider fresh government guidance for the repair and retrofitting of our historic and traditional building stock? Should the priority be authenticity or energy efficiency, or is there a middle ground?</i></p>
<p>SB 10:00</p>	<p>... ex-Town Planner... ... life-long interest in buildings.... MSP in early years of Parliament, a huge amount of my work was on tenements... maintain Edinburgh as a beautiful historic city but actually make it fit for the twenty-first century for the people who live here.</p> <p>The question is absolutely bang-on; we need to think about, what advice do people have regarding their buildings; how do we make sure that maintenance and retrofitting actually gets joined up. One of my experiences in tenements was you could get people to work together to maintain a building but it's really hard <i>to improve</i> a building. [difficulties of carrying out roof repairs]</p> <p>Having said that, there's lots of experience in this city and I think there are lots of opportunities in front of us. Does it go without saying that after COP26 we just need to get on and reduce our carbon emissions? Maldives, Bangladesh, flooding in Germany... no water, no food, climate refugees...</p> <p>And a couple of years ago Corstorphine Road flooded. Stockbridge. Not just the places we know are vulnerable such as the Kelpies, Grangemouth, Glasgow Airport, that we've known about for decades.</p> <p>So it's not that we need to do historic buildings and nothing else, but we need to reduce our emissions and think about how all our historic buildings can become low-carbon and affordable to repair and maintain. And the challenge is to think about what our actual opportunities are.</p>



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	<p>So, I live in a 1740s building and I was allowed to put double glazing in, but I had to make sure that it was the right type of double glazing, a bit more expensive, it's not quite as energy-efficient, but actually you can't see from outside that it's double glazing. I'm quite happy with that compromise. I want my building to look 'as it was built' but I followed the advice. It's quite awkward to find out what to do so we need more information for people.</p> <p>We're not worried about having our historic buildings heated by gas, what comes after gas, there's a lot more work to be done on that and the detail .... Scottish Government's Heat in Buildings Strategy..... Still time to input to some of the key sections in this.</p> <p>So we still have to encourage people to work together and factoring in affordability is absolutely critical because if gas is not going to be used we need an affordable alternative, for historic buildings and for <i>all</i> buildings.</p> <p>..... electricity companies going bust...Bulb today..... 1.7 million consumers and they are going to have to find a new supplier... need support .....</p> <p>Retaining old buildings can be more climate-friendly than replacing them with new-build. So valuing old buildings, that needs to be part of our agenda, even if they are more expensive to repair and maintain.</p> <p>Protect character of our buildings, example double glazing.</p> <p>Roofs, access to solar heat and solar power, a lot tenements that could be a really simple improvement but getting 10 or 12 people to approve, not so simple.</p> <p>Law, regulations, experience, bringing people together, using the expertise of panels like this. Affordability. Joining up the dots</p> <p>Travel, electric vehicles, where do you charge them. Buildings, transport, how we use our land</p> <p>Skills, technology, motivation, funding, VAT, grants, interest-free loans, lots of solutions.</p> <p>Take a more community-based approach. Covid impact, lots of empty buildings in the future.</p> <p>Here to listen; if you have solutions, tell me and I will feed them in to the Scottish Government via the Parliament.</p>
<p>EL 17:25</p>	<p>I think my first response to the question about authenticity is that it's dancing around on the head of a pin, the only people who talk about authenticity are the people in this room. It's delightful, I love it, but it's a very, very narrow concern and it's a concern for people who work within heritage and conservation. I suppose my observation would be that listed buildings are 2% of Scotland's building stock so anything you do to them will not mitigate climate change, it's irrelevant to climate change. They do form 20% of our traditional buildings, so there are about 560,000 traditionally-built buildings in Scotland and 20% of them . . . ? . So authenticity then applies to a more significant proportion of them, and that's . . . ? . But I think for those of us who have worked for a long time in heritage – far longer than me - some of the obsession with details and how things <i>look</i> lead to pushback for us on how we decide to do things in the future. So something may be authentic but poorly detailed in terms of carbon or home insulation and I think rather than authenticity versus climate change being the issue, it's authenticity versus fuel poverty being the issue. When it comes to listed buildings, there's a very small subset of them where people will be experiencing fuel poverty because of the type of owner of listed buildings. But it's that balance there, I think there is going to have to be a review of what we deem acceptable.</p>

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	We're sitting very close to a whole series of tenements which were refurbished in the 1980s and they've been <a href="#">experimental in using new technologies</a> to address fuel poverty. We can do it, but it does need to be done on a case by case basis. But it's a tension between authenticity and fuel poverty, not between authenticity and climate change.
CS	Well actually, there's been some excellent points made, and I just want to come back on one particular point, authenticity. I think what's interesting is, when you compare Scotland, England, the UK, to other countries, we have quite a high number of listed buildings or otherwise designated things – conservation areas, landscapes... I think it's very interesting about the Scottish, and indeed the UK, system is that we have built in this idea, really, it's not about stopping change necessarily, it's about understanding the heritage values and then using them to properly manage that change. And that gives us an ability to really work with what it is we want to protect and therefore what it is we're going to do. So I just want to point that out, it's not necessarily always about authenticity, but it's about understanding what it is for a particular site that we're looking to protect, and that invariably unlocks the potential of what a building can do, whether that's in energy efficiency terms or in any other sort of change. So there's real potential there and I just want to pick up that point in particular.
PD	Would it be fair to say, Christina, that you are advocating a sort of tiered case by case approach based on an understanding of the value of each site?
CS	Absolutely.
CG	<p>Thank you very much. I think it's about finding that balance, so it's understanding our building stock across the UK, across Scotland. And if we're going to achieve net zero, does, controversially, every building has to achieve that or actually is there a balance with some working harder to compensate the ones that can't. So we find a respect system(?), so in other words changing our value system towards it. So it's not that our existing buildings or listed buildings are preventing us from reaching net zero. They only have a certain capacity or potentially authenticity comes into it as well. So is it actually about re-evaluating our value system in terms of net zero and our existing building stock. So it's shifting that to where it needs to be.</p> <p>So I think quite often I say this is an architect with a smile on my face, we are working one building at a time. I think there are some really interesting metrics that are coming out, looking at things much more holistically. To understand how that building fits into the bigger context. Because when we're talking about net zero, you know that one building, I don't want to diminish anyone's efforts or anything, but retrofitting is just one piece of the puzzle. Understanding how everything fits together on a nationwide level is just so important and how everything works in balance, and there's actually some fantastic work going on by LETI, the London Energy Transformation Initiative and it's got fantastic <a href="#">guidance</a> and it's just a whole new way of thinking. So I think slightly off piste but I think it relates to both Christina's and Euan's points, and it <i>values authenticity alongside those wider goals</i>.</p>
Robbie Mcfarlane	Question about number of listed buildings, conclusion we are talking about traditional buildings being 20% of Scotland's buildings.

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EL	<p>I think my point was more that listed buildings is a very narrow concern where authenticity becomes particularly important, whereas traditional buildings if they're listed or not, in a conservation area or not, there is more flexibility as to how we treat these.</p> <p>Could I just come back on one of points [made earlier] because a lot of discussion around this is around mitigation and I brought this up at a previous event here: The biggest threat for our buildings is how we adapt them to the climate changing, and we know already with what we've seen... we're already experiencing that in the city with gutters, wallhead gutters, the impact of changes in rainfall, and how do we adapt to that – that to me is going to become a much more pressing threat. People think that there is a leak in the roof and there isn't a leak, although there is a problem because the rainfall is gaining access, but it's because of the design which isn't designed for the type of weather [we are now experiencing] and that to me is where huge pressure forms.</p>
SB 26:30	<p>OK, I have to admit to failing to speak into the microphone sufficiently directly for the 60 people listening on zoom to be able to hear anything of me remarks. So to protect the audience here I will not repeat my entire comments. But I suppose I wanted to say that we should work together to support innovation, knowledge exchange and funding. So that we can keep our historic buildings alive. There's listed buildings but I think the point you made there is that there are lots of <i>older</i> buildings as well which are still a huge part of our heritage. You have tenements in Edinburgh or in Glasgow are a fundamental part of our heritage and continuing to use older buildings is usually more climate friendly than replacing them. But they can be harder to maintain and that point you made there about keeping them adapted to deal with climate change, those things are really important issues, but the other thing I think is important is how we heat our buildings. Now I live in a really old house, but it's got a gas boiler. So it doesn't really work for some renewable technologies, so I'm just trying to make it more energy-efficient, and I think the next 10 years how we heat and power buildings is going to be quite a challenge. No less for listed buildings, because it could be converting a gas boiler to a hydrogen boiler, except nobody's ready do that yet. Some of the solutions have to be community-led, but they all need funding and I think that's probably the biggest challenge is not just owners putting money into buildings but to think about the tax breaks and issues of sharing knowledge. I think that's one of the key things from networks like this is how we launch knowledge sharing.</p>
PD 28:15	<p><i>Should pre-1919 buildings be expected to attain the same energy standards as those for post-1919, or is a different approach appropriate?</i></p>
MJ	<p>There's an answer to that question which lasts for three days, so I won't give that one. I think when we're talking about retrofit for traditionally constructed buildings, we need to take a step back and rather than thinking about significance or character or anything like that, my first port of call is always to step back and say, right how does this building perform? How does it perform thermally? How does it perform in terms of ventilation and how does the building fabric perform in terms of moisture? And only once we thoroughly and completely understand that, should we be thinking about retrofitting the building. Having understood the building, yes, we can improve its thermal performance. We've done a lot of work at Historic Environment Scotland – site-based research, case studies. We've published a big guide last week. So the knowledge is out there about how to retrofit traditional buildings, safely in a way which isn't going to damage the building, which is going to mean it's thermally efficient, but will last for another 100 or 200 years.</p>

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	<p>So, should a traditional building be expected to meet the standards of a more recent one? It's a complicated question. Thermally, we could probably do it, and we could probably do it in a way which works for the traditional building fabric. But it ain't going to be cheap. And that's the bottom line with a lot of this. Yes, we can bring traditional buildings up to a good thermal performance, but we're talking 10s of thousands of pounds, not the £5,000 that I've seen quoted, or even £10,000. We're talking about a lot more money than that, if we're going to make a significant improvement to the thermal performance of traditional buildings.</p> <p>I'm fairly relaxed in a lot of ways about targets. EPC band C or B, I think most traditional buildings can meet that target, and I think we can do it in a way that's safe for the building, but it's going to need a lot of investment in materials; it's going to need a hell of an investment in skills because who's going to do the work? It's going to need a lot of investment in design skills because who's going to design the work. So yes, we can do it, but we need to spend a lot of money to get where the government wants to be.</p>
CG 31:50	<p>It's a really interesting challenge in terms of, I've sat on a lot of panels and given a lot of talks recently and it's very easy to say and hear the right thing. So there is a lot of hope and energy in rooms, but actually the deliverability is another challenge. So I think we've got to actually digest what we can do on a day-to-day basis, and that's where the gap is at the moment. So we have overarching targets in terms of 2045, 2030 and what we're having to deliver, but how as an architect does that change what I do on my drawing board or desk tomorrow.</p> <p>So actually, when you try to work backwards from that instead of moving forward towards it, it's a very different picture, where we should be in six months' time, where we should be in a year, 18 months, two years. We don't understand that road map as professionals so even not factoring in the money, which is very difficult, actually the kind of professional skills involved in it that, but I personally have some of the tools that can help towards this – actually we don't understand those increments yet for what we're having to actually deliver....</p> <p>I think there are certain measures that can be put in place to ease that but I think there has to be a communication element to home-owners because who is expected to pay for this is a big part of it. This is a huge ask of Scottish Government and the UK government, but it's a huge ask of the homeowner, so how do you break down that supply chain, how do you get economies of scale. And that's a whole different conversation I'll try not to open up, but I think there are opportunities for professionals to be involved in that conversation and help guide that conversation. But the thing is, we are all busy doing our day jobs and actually those targets that we have to achieve to work backwards are slipping away from us. So I think it's about bringing everything together to try and make that work, but I kind of avoided the finance there, sorry.</p>
CS 34:15	<p>Thank you, I just want to reflect, there are probably two sides to this question. The first was, 'can these buildings be expected to achieve the same standards' and the other one is around special treatment. The one about the same standard looks at these buildings in the round, because of course you don't start measuring them from the day that they first get used. And of course, by reusing a historic building, you are inherently doing something sustainable. You are preventing the CO2 emissions across both demolition with extraction, refinement, transport and construction of new buildings. So it's very important, I think, first of all to think about historic buildings not just as a cultural resource, which they absolutely are. But also as a carbon resource that cannot be reclaimed once lost. So really, thinking in those two terms is very important.</p>



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	<p>Another thing that's been touched on by Euan was, selfishly, if we think about historic buildings in the climate emergency, there's probably two key kinds of risk. One is the risk of the effects of climate change in respect of the environmental changes. We've touched on drainage and that sort of thing, so that's the impact of the climate itself. But the other is the human element, and that is the risk if people don't have a clear path of what they can do with their building. What will they do that is entirely well-intentioned but it might be very harmful to the building; incur costs for the owner down the line because it doesn't work with the fabric of the building, causes problems, and it's also probably not the most effective thing that they could do with their money to increase energy efficiency. So for me, I think there's this real need for a particular key path for particular building types. And also to bear in mind, of course, as many people here know that you can't really apply the same solutions to the non traditional building as to a traditional building. You must work with the technology that is there and quite often you might find much lower cost interventions to be far more effective than necessarily jumping to things like solar panels.</p>
EL	<p>On the cost point, we're all sort of thinking that historical is more expensive and <i>special</i>. Some of you will be aware that there is a scheme in Glasgow which is in a traditional tenement, owned by a Housing Association, <a href="#">Niddrie Road</a>, and they are refurbishing that entire block to EnerPHit standard with air source heat pumps on the ground floor. And it is wildly intrusive, you couldn't live in it; the whole place is stripped back to the shell while they make it airtight. And the costs involved in that are of the order of £30,000 per flat. So that's for a traditional building.</p> <p>Queens Cross Housing Association have redone the <a href="#">Woodside Multi-Storey flats</a> in Glasgow, which were done by Collective Architecture. The tenants remained in the Multis and it cost about £50,000 per flat. That's a modern construction. Modern construction also often needs a bespoke, well understood, 'how the building works' solution - it's not just 'pre 1919', not just 'pre 1944'. There are many building types that need a very specific approach. And for these modern buildings it's also expensive, so it's expensive across the board to address retrofit for energy standards. But the driver for these ones in particular, because they're housing associations, has to be to make sure that people are not in fuel poverty.</p> <p>For historic buildings they are maybe going to be less energy efficient and so cost more to heat, but that then determines who can live in those houses, and if we're saying that they're really good for us culturally and give us well-being and they're good for our health, then everyone deserves to live in all sorts of houses. But there's a balance you have there and there's a difficult thing to decide to make sure people are not going to fall into fuel poverty.</p> <p>But that also comes back to where our energies come from. In my time in heritage I suppose I have seen people object to ground source heat pumps, air source heat pumps, solar panels, wind farms, on land and at sea. Don't let's mention nuclear power. Also incinerators. Every form of energy generation I have seen people within various aspects of the conservation movement say we don't want that type of energy. We all want and need energy but none of us seem to want to see where it comes from. We're going to have to change our attitude.</p>
James Simpson 39:45	<p>I'm actually a bit fed up of everybody saying that it's traditional buildings that are the problem. I think modern buildings by and large are the problem. Modern buildings don't last forever and are not easily dealt with when they start not to function. Traditional buildings genuinely do last forever, as long as they're maintained, and one of the things that we've learned, Christina, in my lifetime, is actually to maintain buildings, and maintenance in this city is infinitely better than it was. Also, construction is a big issue. I believe we have to, what was <a href="#">published in the Guardian a year ago in</a></p>



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	<p><a href="#">January</a>, we've got to stop knocking buildings down. We've got to retain, reuse, repurpose, recycle all these things and focus on other aspects for energy. Now in the short term, there's all sorts of things we can do.</p> <p>The first thing is that tenements are actually very efficient, the area of outside wall, per volume, is actually very good. Individual houses, whether they're in suburban developers' estates, or whatever, however much better their insulation is, are less efficient. There are simple things we should be doing now like, in this town, making the shutters work. And closing the shutters when it's cold. Putting in secondary glazing in the line of the batten rods. Putting insulation in roofs. All these are good short term things. With time, I mean there's not a lot of time but with time all the technology will be improving. So I think I've said too much.</p>
<p>PD</p>	<p>Moses' team has published quite a lot on this subject.....</p>
<p>PD 42:00</p>	<p><i>Could the grading system for listed buildings be used or at least of practical use in defining how far listed buildings can be required to meet future energy efficiency and zero carbon standards?</i></p>
<p>EL</p>	<p>Well, who said 'grades' because in Scotland we don't have grades, do we – we have <i>categories</i> of listing. And the answer is 'No' because the category of listing just tells us the historic or architectural significance – it tells us if it's outstanding, major or representative but it tells us absolutely nothing else about the method of construction or how it performs.</p> <p>I suppose two examples you would have in Edinburgh are <a href="#">Cables Wynd House</a> – it's an A-listed building of lots of flats. Great King Street is also an A-listed terrace of buildings. But your treatment of them would be very different. None of the flats were seen in the listing of Cables Wynd House, maybe there is something within those flats that should be protected, maybe of kitsch value... But they are totally different types of building, so their category doesn't tell us enough.</p> <p>You could then look at some of the more recent statements of significance, which are published as listings descriptions now and are extensive. That's maybe a bit more helpful but ultimately to use the listing mechanism to decide how interventionist to be in a building, you would need to have another section in the list description about the building's construction. And that's a job for Moses; he's got enough on his plate and I don't think the team that does the listing is geared up to address that.</p> <p>So unfortunately, it would be lovely if it was easy, but maybe the question reflects that awful idea that 'if it's C-listed it means it's just the outside', it doesn't cover the whole building. In fact, if it's listed the whole building is listed but the significance requires to be defined, so we can't use the category system.</p>
<p>MJ</p>	<p>Right, just to get one point out of the way, I do not have time to do that! So someone else can volunteer. Yes, I couldn't agree more with that. Listing is an excellent tool for recognising the significance of building fabric. But we could have an A-listed building and improve its thermal performance dramatically, and then have a C-listed building down the road that's actually very hard to improve, and so I think that the two aren't really anything to do with each other.</p> <p>We took on an A-listed vernacular building up in the Highlands and improved its thermal performance dramatically. So I think we really need to break in our minds any link between a listed building being difficult to improve and an unlisted building, easy to improve. It's really about what</p>

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	building fabric we find when we come at the building and only once we've assessed that can we properly decide what to do from a thermal efficiency standpoint.
PD	<i>I am going to throw this over now to Christina Sinclair with a slightly different spin on it – IF WE CAN'T use the listings, how do we deal with it on a regulatory basis, given the way building regulations work in Scotland?</i>
CS 46:00	<p>I'd like to think I partly answered the question earlier on when I said it's not necessarily about stopping change but about understanding what the significance or special interest is, and then using that as a springboard to make decisions. And understanding that kind of significance or special interest of what can be done with that particular building. Within our regulatory system, we obviously have quite a high degree of protection and legislation, but also building regs and again inherent within that is this idea that it's the special interest that you are protecting. So there may be quite a lot you can do to that building once you understand what is of special interest and what is not. And also with regard to building regulations, there is now acceptance of course for historic buildings and for buildings of special interest and to my perception that actually works quite well as it allows for necessary flexibility without being overly prescriptive.</p> <p>And I just wanted to come onto one other point which was made very well in terms of maintenance. It's often overlooked and I feel because perhaps when there's a big problem, people go towards having a big solution. And certainly we need to be thinking about large scale and absolutely no question about that. But the simple fact is that regular maintenance of historic buildings is actually pretty critical in terms of mitigating the effects of climate change. It's very difficult to measure, but certainly there are cases that have found that a bit of good maintenance can increase energy efficiency in a building by about 10 to 15%. And when you multiply that across the sorts of numbers of historic buildings that we have, that is a very, very significant impact.</p>
PD 47:57	<i>In that case, are existing regulatory instruments for the repair and maintenance of these buildings adequate? So for example at the moment if buildings in the city are in disrepair, the buildings regulation response would normally either be in terms of dangerous buildings or a section 28 dilapidations notice [in the past]. Are those adequate, are they used effectively? Given the perceived LACK of maintenance in buildings, does the existing system work?</i>
CS	I think probably short answer is it could work an awful lot better and it needs to have acknowledgement of a point that's been raised a few times – the need to support homeowners particularly for repair and maintenance liability issues that they have to address. So I think that's part of the value of these conversations is to try and work out some of the things that might be done.
EL 49:15	OK, I will come in on that because the point is that the system isn't good enough. I mean, the work that I saw with the Tenement Working Group was to address the fact that we do not maintain our built stock. While, in Edinburgh... I'm now based in Glasgow, in Govan... <i>In Edinburgh</i> you're blessed with a beautiful city that's very well maintained compared to large parts of Glasgow and across the central belt and the West. And I was just speaking to someone recently who is involved in the grants for big projects. You're now grant funding buildings that were in the public sector...so it's not just private buildings, it's public and stakeholders... empty buildings..... Strip the rainwater goods off and accelerate the decay. We also talked to the private sector, what were the barriers to them taking on public sector buildings when they become redundant (and schools and 'redundancy' of schools, I know that's controversial), but the barrier for them was the condition they were





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	<p>receiving the building in, so it became economically unviable for them to find a re-use of the building. It becomes cheaper for them to demolish it and so there has to be a complete change in how we look at maintaining our buildings. I've worked with parliamentarians around pressing the Government to improve our approach to tenement maintenance. I viewed that as a Trojan horse, it's nothing to do with tenements, it's about ALL buildings and my hope was that this would push through that agenda. The Government has delayed the research that the Law Commission are required to do, around reviewing the Tenement Act, to 2026 I think. As you know our targets are 2030, 2045 so it is far too slow, so there needs to be a real huge amount of pressure put on the Government through Parliament. And Sarah may want to come in on that.</p>
SB	<p>I hadn't actually realised that fact – that that work, that legal advice wasn't going to come until 2026, that is the end of this term of the Scottish Parliament. So I was really shocked to hear that the last time I was in this room, at the tenement briefing. There had been things done, like the missing share provision, that's a really interesting model. Let's say there are 6 owners of property. One of those owners cannot afford to do anything but is in favour of the building being properly maintained. So the other five owners put their money in; the building repairs get done. The one who couldn't afford it for whatever reason, they basically knew she was paid for by the Council. And when that owner is either able to pay or sells the property, that money goes back to the Council. Now the Council needs to have a bit of money in order to do that, but it is actually critical in terms of keeping shared buildings together. I was thinking when I was listening to that answer there, there's other things about city centres; I was in Glasgow just there at COP 26. I used to work in the city centre, when I left the Parliament for three years. I could not believe the poor quality of buildings in Glasgow city centre. And I was looking at buildings thinking, "is that building safe" – I'm not a buildings expert, but I'm thinking. "There's an awful lot of plants growing out of that set of walls; the roof doesn't look very good", and it's right in the city centre. So there's an issue about Council responses with that. So we often focus on the Scottish Government, and that's important in terms of laws, standards, national planning, NPF4 as mentioned before, and the consultations mentioned earlier. There's also something about getting our councils both encouraged and funded to deal with some of this stuff. It's not about not using the private sector. It's about saying, well, we've got buildings are not safe or where you can do a joint approach – you create new homes in the city centre - bring alive our city centres, especially when you look at all of our traditional city centres that have fallen apart. So it goes back to the point earlier, it's not just about listed buildings, but it's about the buildings we value that are actually old. And just thinking about can we do a bit more political pressure locally as well as nationally to get some of the solutions identified. And anyone who's got those solutions and ideas – start feeding them in to your local representatives, thanks.</p>
PD 54:00	<p>It may horrify listeners to learn that there are three local authorities in Scotland who as a matter of unwritten policy, do not pursue enforcement action.</p>
James Simpson	<p>Could I make one comment on what Sarah said, when I think you were discussing tenements, some years ago, the question of local authorities funding people who, in a group of proprietors, couldn't afford it – the theory then was that it would be recorded on the title and then when the property was eventually sold or transferred, the money would go back to the Council, so it shouldn't be in the long term a cost for the Council.</p>

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<i>Mathew Reilly</i>	<i>It was mentioned that we need to look at this on a case by case basis. What happens when a client seeks a generic solution for pre 1919 builds and cannot afford the case by case option? Do the panel have suggestions on how to deal with this?</i>
CG	<p>This is a very good question and it's where building typologies become very tricky. Because you can group buildings together, and there's research happening at the moment which is looking into that, but every building is different depending on what it's had done and every building's story is slightly different, so there probably are guides and handbooks that will be developed in terms of how one should approach buildings but there should always be a very clear understanding of what that specific building is, and how it acts, or what its orientation is, even, can play a really big part.</p> <p>So it is very, very difficult to manage. I think with regards to finance and how we can move forward with this, it relates to my point earlier in terms of meeting our 2045 targets – so actually someone can't afford to do everything now. It may be that there's a plan for how to get there but one portion of it is done now. I use this analogy too much but it's one piece of the puzzle. So the property has a plan, so it knows where it's going, but maybe only 1/5 of the work can be carried out, but maybe 1/5 of the work for the next decade and so on and so forth. And hopefully things will accelerate a bit towards the end, but I think 'deal with this, all or nothing' is too much to ask. So there has to be a phased approach to be able to manage buildings, and this is where it gets very tricky with detailing, draughts, cold bridges. So there needs to be the holistic plan, the professional oversight at the beginning to ensure that it works, but the deliverability doesn't have to come up front.</p> <p>Again, it relates to the working backwards from 2045 and understanding where we need to get to, as opposed to treating problems on a case by case basis.</p>
PD	Thank you very much. As any expert witness will tell you, the problem isn't just people doing the wrong thing, but doing the wrong thing <i>badly</i> . Moses, are there any pointers you can give us?
MJ	<p>I'm not sure if I like that introduction! In terms of guidance: Chris Morgan and John Gilbert Architects and the Pebble Trust produced a very good guide on sustainable refurbishment of traditional buildings [<a href="#">Sustainable Renovation - Improving Homes for Energy, Health and Environment</a>] and I suppose I should really also give a plug to our guide to retrofit, which can be downloaded for free from the Historic Environment Scotland website [<a href="#">Guide to Energy Retrofit of Traditional Buildings</a>].</p> <p>More widely, that question raises quite a lot of other questions. The majority of retrofit work today is carried out by retrofit contractors and is designed by retrofit contractors and is then installed by the same retrofit contractor. Which <i>can</i> work, but we really do need to look quite seriously at the skills and winding out the skills of those who are undertaking this work and those who are designing it and ask ourselves, do we have enough people who can design retrofit work on traditional buildings <i>well</i> and do we have enough people who can install it well, and I think the answer to that, at the moment, is "No".</p> <p>So there's a challenge there for someone.</p>
<i>Mathew Reilly</i> 59:30	<i>Should conservation professionals be trained further to understand energy efficiency and 'whole house' retrofit strategies in more depth? PAS 2035 started to suggest this but a 3-day training might not be enough for many architects / professionals.</i>



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	<i>Also building standards officers, lender surveyors and many others, I guess you could also include tradespeople?</i>
PD	That sounds like a question for the chair of the RIAS Practice Committee but since I've been told I'm to let other people speak I am going to punt that back over to Christina!
CG	The difficulty with this is that we are in a really tricky situation to try to deliver these targets that have been set. PAS 2035 comes up with a <i>framework</i> for deliverability but I think sometimes we can overlook what we've already got. So, architects are trained in a specific way; I am not going to say that existing buildings play an enormous part in that curriculum though it is currently being looked at but the skills to understand materials, understand the fabric that you're working with and know ..... the detail, don't change. Architects have been working with existing buildings for hundreds, thousands of years. So actually there's a shift there, it doesn't necessarily need a new role, but it does need some training and investment and upskilling to make sure everyone is on the same page. So I think all of these things coming out are trying to do something really, really positive but sometimes we come up with a new solution whereas we've already got one staring us in the face. So we do need the vehicles and mechanisms to be able to tie everything together so hopefully at some point there will be a coming together of the knowledge as opposed to keeping trying to do new and different things.
CS	<p>Yes, I was really angling for the microphone there! Yes, that was a point very well made and just a couple of additional thoughts: I think we can all agree that training is vital and it's something we just have to keep at, and there are two elements, I think it's not always the case that we need some new role but it is about breaking barriers between different professionals and working together. To use an example within EWH, we changed a core area of what we do in order to focus on the climate emergency; we created a lead climate emergency role within our teams, combining heritage and climate emergency expertise.</p> <p>In terms of finding solutions for the city specifically, there are a number of good cross-sectoral and cross-professional working groups that are working now to help address some of these issues. So my point is that sometimes it's about the right role, sometimes it's about getting the right people round the table and it's absolutely always about getting the right training.</p>
PD	<i>The climate emergency is a good opportunity to call again on Westminster government for a special VAT regime for listed buildings as a better and more straightforward alternative to grant aid – yes or no or somewhere in between?</i>
CG	I don't think I am going to answer yes or no but I am going to change the question. I think we have already determined that we need to expand the question beyond just 'listed buildings', to 'our whole existing buildings stock'. And I think, controversially or not, I am going to say that current financial policy tells us that if we knock it all down and start again, that would be preferable and easier because the government's interpretation of how we can tackle the climate emergency to reach net zero emissions tells us that that's true. So it doesn't factor in embodied carbon, it doesn't factor in carbon resource in buildings, as Christina has already mentioned today, so actually <u>our policies do not match our priorities</u> , which is a massive problem. As you can tell, it's something I find infuriating. As from 1 October 2021 VAT at the standard rate (20%) was applied to all approved alteration to listed buildings or scheduled monuments which were previously zero-rated for VAT. The tricky thing is, it's not for want or will in Scotland. There has been a lot of representation from



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	<p>the RIAS and other professional bodies in Scotland to the Scottish Government through the Construction Industry Coronavirus Forum during the pandemic that was set up that was cross-industry... pan-industry...further than just professional institutes... chaired by Kevin Stewart, if I remember correctly, and essentially, there was a huge amount of support for this in Scotland, to make it work as part of the green recovery and actually, the positives, the opportunities were there to be seen. But unfortunately it is not a devolved power and for all the representation that went to Westminster, we did not receive a positive response.</p> <p>It was also brought up a lot at COP26. I can only say that the questions were avoided or that there was a shrugging of shoulders in terms of engaging in communication and I don't say that lightly. So it's a very difficult subject, and I think the difficulty with this in Scotland is that current and upcoming planning up to NPF 4 places emphasis on community, on amenity, on local place plans. That involves communities and groups getting together to improve their existing building stock and improve what they have. Actually the RIAS had correspondence with Sarah's office in terms of community trusts struggling to get projects off the ground, and there being a 20% cost differential making or breaking that community project. That is one of the many contacts the RIAS has had, people who just can't believe they can't get their project off the ground and it's often about that 20% difference. So there is an economic driver, there has been a lot of research done to show the benefit of zero-rating or bringing parity to VAT. Scotland is just in a really difficult position in terms of how it can deliver that. And there is support available and it has been tabled that there could be rebate systems, different angles that Scotland can take but I know that that is very difficult. One of the things I wanted to note is that it's been tabled as one of the most significant changes that we could make to support recovery in the domestic construction sector coming out of the pandemic but also towards the climate emergency and I think that's really key because when the policies don't match the priorities then, what are we working towards. So, there's two missing things, one is an understanding of the value of existing buildings and that embodied carbon in the overall picture, which I know is very difficult. But secondly if we are working towards net zero emissions then we've got to take into account our existing buildings stock and we've already had the difficulties of how to pay for that presented to us today... Why aren't we finding a mechanism to encourage that and support it. Actually we have a mechanism that is preventative and that is a problem.</p>
PD	<p>I am going to hand over to Sarah, but before I do so will just note in passing that I remember well the tax break on VAT for listed buildings and I remember clearly when the Chancellor was abolishing it he said it was simply 'a rich man's tax break'.</p>
SB	<p>Yes, so it goes back to the point about the value of buildings. Described as embodied carbon, but it's actually just knocking down buildings and then spending a huge amount of climate emissions in putting up something new so we'd be much better to keep the existing buildings if they're still structurally viable. I think it's worth having a good lobby if we've got contacts because both the UK and the Scottish governments have now got targets and next year we're going to have another COP. So there will be an opportunity within a year to ask questions about, not just how have you met your targets but what are the new policy mechanisms available, so I think now would be an excellent time to have a good lobby of the UK government and I think it's definitely worth doing and I'm up for [inaudible] next year.</p>
EL	<p>The VAT, the VAT question, we've been thrashing it out already over quite a number of years and we've lobbied with parliament or my predecessor lobbied the UK government past the last budget and we got a no. I find it very difficult to see a way through this because they are just not seeing it.</p>

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	<p>We're asking them to reduce the amount of money they have up front, through VAT, as is tourism, as are a number of other sectors. And I think asking the Chancellor to do that, or the Scottish Chancellor, would it make a significant difference to our maintenance? well it might but between 2012 and 2019 the condition of traditional buildings has improved according to the Scottish traditional buildings survey. So even with that additional 20%, our buildings in Scotland are in better condition now than they were in 2012. So if things are getting better, and the Exchequer is getting an income, if you were him, and you were not a buildings specialist, and you were not a conservationist, you might come to his conclusion. We thrash this so much, we spend a huge amount of time, we're getting nowhere, it frustrates me, in my last job I thought, I must switch off from this, the door is closed. In England there is also a demand for this but until they make the connection, between this and demolition and the whole life carbon cost of a building, until the UK government makes this connection, I don't think they will be receptive, but they must be made to make that connection.</p>
SB	<p>It's probably not the UK Treasury I would start up on about this but perhaps the UK Climate Change Committee. Scale of what has to be done... tax on vehicles... EVs...</p>
EL 73:05	<p>If you express it as a rich man's tax break, for listed buildings, I would find that offensive... I live in a historic building, built in 1895, it's not in a conservation area but it has the same costs to maintain it, and I don't want to subsidise this. Some of the lobbying that has gone on for this, with a focus on listed buildings, doesn't do itself any favours because it does just appeal to a very niche minority of well-heeled people.</p>
Jilly MacLeod 74:30	<p><i>Do you think the Government at some point is going to establish an advisory body so that people have a body they can go to, to find out what they should be doing, what they shouldn't be doing? Like a sort of Citizen's Advice but for buildings.</i></p>
MJ	<p>Without wanting to create a rod for my own back, we're quite happy to take enquiries at Historic Environment Scotland, if you want to email me, we can give you some thoughts. That doesn't necessarily answer the much wider question and I think government's response tends to be, "Well, the industry will provide the advice, or professionals will provide the advice.". The problem with the industry providing advice is often the retrofit industry will only provide advice on the products that they themselves install, and again it's come up a number of times tonight but the vast majority of retrofit work doesn't have professional involvement. It probably should, but are there enough professionals to get involved with every retrofit scheme – not at the moment but yes, there is definitely a need for better advice for owners. What I will say is that Home Energy Scotland do give advice on a sort of generic level.</p>
James Simpson	<p>I'd simply like to say that what HES is doing on this is excellent, though I think it doesn't always easily reach the right people. I hate to say so but I think this is something within our remit Christina (Gaiger), and Jocelyn [Cunliffe]. But I think anyone who calls themselves a conservation architect should actually be just as skilled on climate change issues as they are on heritage issues, the two things are equal now in terms of the objects of conservation. And I think that something that we could be doing is producing some standard specifications, perhaps in conjunction with HES, [inaudible] so that if people ask in practical terms what can I do, we can provide an answer.</p>



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Speaking for Scotland's Buildings

PD	(addressing James Simpson) It may or may not have reached you on one of our endless mailings but I was delighted: ARB [Architects Registration Board] have now made climate and retrofit a mandatory competence for newly-qualified architects and it will therefore roll in for qualified architects with the enhanced CPD measure. The RIAS has a special CPD [continuing Professional Development] committee looking at what the Scottish competency should be.
PD	<i>If zero carbon is the focus and the priority, should protection of character no longer be a legal requirement nor indeed a policy consideration?</i>
CS	<p>... It's important to ask, and the way that it's phrased is deliberately provocative. But that's how that question reaches my ears sometimes, when we receive calls and give advice sometimes at the EWH office. What's very telling about the way this question is often asked is that it puts heritage and climate change in an 'and / or' position implying that you can either protect your wonderful historic environment and all of the wonderful cultural, economic and social benefits that brings, or you can address the climate emergency. But nothing is as black and white as that. I think the positive message I really want to impart today is, given what we've been talking about in terms of the number of listed buildings, historic buildings, protected buildings, not only are they part of the solution, but in fact if we are going to start to meet these goals, they <i>must</i> be part of the solution. They are a really important part of the tools in addressing the climate emergency.</p> <p>So, do I think it's about de-prioritising or loosening up the legal protection – absolutely not, because it's not an 'or' situation, it's an 'and'. By protecting the historic environment you are inherently doing something very sustainable. Of course, the solution is not a totally passive one, we don't just continue doing everything the way we've always done, we must adapt and do things in a better way; and as I think a few people have mentioned tonight it's about finding the right balance and providing a clear path for particular building types with some margin of variability between them, but really finding a clear path for people that is based on an understanding of the building's technology.</p> <p>I'd encourage you to look at a particular case study on your way out, which is something that EWH was very much involved in on the Canongate, along with City of Edinburgh Council, John Gilbert architects and the Scottish Government providing funding. So that is an example of what I have been talking about: understanding the building; conservation and sustainability working hand in hand.</p> <p>It was a successful project, achieving a reduction in operational carbon emissions by a little over 50%, a reduction of 28 tonnes of carbon per year or the equivalent to planting around 3,000 trees.</p> <p>So it can be done, it's not an 'or', it's very much an 'and'.</p>
MJ	Right, I'll flip it around even further and I'll say that if zero carbon is the goal, then the retention and protection of the character of traditional buildings should happen naturally, as a consequence of our aim for zero carbon. The building fabric we already have can be upgraded in most cases, it can be worked with. If we have a single-glazed window as was mentioned earlier, shutters, secondary glazing, can be used to improve its performance, without having to install very carbon-heavy uPVC windows which will last for how long – 25 years? 30 years?
Someone else	10?



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	<p>... a sash and case window will last almost indefinitely unless some miscreant throws a stone at the glass, and even then it can be easily repaired. So I think, to be positive about it, I think we can make traditional buildings more energy efficient <u>and</u> retain their character if we do it properly.</p>
EL	<p>I think it's a bit like the carbon thing just turned out to be a really convenient global issue that we are jumping on the back of, and one of the things coming out that's discussed quite a lot is around whole-life carbon cost and demolition - Wainwright's article about ending demolitions, which is a campaign that lots of people are jumping on the back of, skyscrapers, ... inaudible.....</p> <p>And in Edinburgh in the current context there are buildings, 70s office buildings that people are looking at and the questions are asked, do you reuse. There was one at the bottom of Dundas Street, refused consent at the planning committee, they were saying that the architect should be encouraged or asked to look at reusing the structure.</p> <p>I'm slightly concerned about it because when we talk about whole life carbon cost, it's a little bit ... bungalow in Ravelston, nothing special but a little bit Arts and Crafts, it was demolished and now a block of probably about 15 flats has replaced it. If we are demolishing things and increasing the density of living so that people are no longer dependent on transport etc etc, that probably has to be factored into the calculation of the whole life carbon cost of the demolition.</p> <p>Also Quatermile, which had an intense carbon cost but it's now a dense site with people living in it.</p> <p>We have to make sure we use that argument intelligently, not when there are buildings of cultural significance, listed buildings, the whole life carbon cost is maybe if [long inaudible passage but I think he is saying there are some buildings that we want to preserve not because it is 'cheaper' in carbon terms but because they are beautiful things. ]</p>
CG	<p>It's about bringing everything together again, so if we go back to VAT and go back to lobbying, it's almost not worth it because on paper we might reach net zero but actually in practice of understanding what reducing our carbon looks like, over a much longer term including the very clear example that you just made – actually, that's not in-built to our policy, that's not what we're looking at. At the moment we are looking at emissions. Therefore on paper, we may deliver for 2045. So lobbying for VAT doesn't make any difference.</p> <p>The campaigning for retaining existing buildings, and not demolishing probably won't make any difference to that because on paper it might work. So there's a difference at the moment between the reality of what net zero emissions looks like and the reality of actually doing 'less is more', understanding what we're doing, being strategic in the wider picture of how much carbon will be expected so we're in a kind of junction where not quite aligned in terms of....I'll give you an example, so if the new gas boiler has just been installed and it's a year old. Should we rip that out and put an air-source heat pump in, or actually has the carbon already been put into that gas boiler so we should let it run its life; should it reach the end of its maintenance schedule and need to be replaced before that change is made. Now it's quite controversial thing to say. But I think it gives an example for how we have to look very holistically at things despite what we are trying to achieve on paper.</p>
SB	<p>So it's having a joined-up approach so that you think about how you tackle climate change in a way that creates jobs, tackles inequalities and is a much more joined up approach.</p>



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Example of planting trees – in theory good but you need to plant the right trees in the right places, right time. Ripping out certain areas of the Highlands in order to plant the wrong trees is not going to help us.

Then mentioned fuel poverty, community heat, community-based solutions...

I think the interesting thing would be where you go next in terms of this discussion.