



SCOTLAND'S NATIONAL LITTER STRATEGY: HIGHLIGHTING THE WORK OF OUR PARTNERS

PAPERLESS TICKETING AT HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND





HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND (HES) HAS WORKED WITH ZERO WASTE SCOTLAND ON A NUMBER OF PROJECTS, INVOLVING ENCOURAGING RECYCLING, AND PREVENTING LITTER AND FLYTIPPING ON THEIR SITES AND ACROSS THE WIDER HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT. HES IS ALSO A MEMBER OF THE SCOTTISH PARTNERSHIP AGAINST RURAL CRIME (SPARC).

Scotland's historic sites attract unprecedented numbers of visitors each year, with Edinburgh Castle alone now drawing in more than two million people annually. This reflects the nation's booming tourism sector and the challenges which that brings to operating sustainably. As climate change has become a climate emergency, conservation efforts are widening to tackle some of the issues which modern-day sightseeing brings to centuries-old monuments.

Historic Environment Scotland has made a commitment to reduce their carbon emissions to 'Net Zero' from their 2015-16 baseline level by March 2045. Waste and litter prevention is just one area where they are making a difference.

What has been done to make a difference?

Historic Environment Scotland manages more than 350 historic sites nationwide, including Edinburgh's iconic



castle. If every visitor buys a single-use paper ticket, it generates a vast amount of waste which can also all too easily become litter if these tickets are blown or thrown away.

In 2017 HES successfully trialled paperless ticketing for its 200,000 members. Under the new system, members can gain entry to its sites simply by showing their membership card, instead of having to have a paper ticket printed out too.

So far, in the two years since HES switched to paperless for its members, the organisation has avoided roughly 280,000 tickets being printed at Edinburgh and Stirling castles. In addition, it has prevented the printing of around 320,000 receipts at its smaller sites where members can also present their card for scanning to avoid generating unnecessary paper waste.

What have the other benefits been?

Gillian Crowther, Admissions & Ecommerce Manager says, "Not only has this change reduced litter, it has also significantly reduced queuing times, as well as bringing ongoing savings on printing costs."

Katie Carter, Circular Economy Project Officer says, "Small pieces of paper, such as tickets and receipts are prone to blow out of bins, fall out of pockets or are accidentally dropped so by eliminating them from our operations, we have prevented them from ever becoming litter in the first place."

What next?

Following the success of the initial trial, HES published its first Litter Prevention Action Plan in 2018, and it includes 16 actions across the three litter prevention themes of Information, Infrastructure and Enforcement.

Further, more recent activity has included:

- Since April 2019 HES has also allowed people booking online to collect their tickets on site instead of printing them off in advance – ending the printing of thousands of A4 sheets of paper.
- To remove the need to print online tickets altogether, HES now plans to trial and roll out new scanning equipment to process orders straight from a mobile phone or similar device.

HES reports that members welcome these efforts to reduce waste as well as litter. Katie adds: "We find that our members and visitors are, like us, passionate about the historic environment and want it to be shared and enjoyed with pride, by everyone. So, wherever we are reducing our environmental impact, it is welcomed and celebrated."

Switching to paperless ticketing systems is something which other venues within and outwith tourism could also implement to reduce litter, waste and costs. ●

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND'S PAPERLESS TICKETS

KEY STATS

- 200,000 HES MEMBERS NOW BENEFIT FROM PAPERLESS TICKETING
- HES HAS AVOIDED PRINTING OVER HALF A MILLION TICKETS SINCE 2017
- COLLECTION OF ONLINE ORDERS HAS MEANT THAT FIVE MILLION VISITORS A YEAR CAN AVOID PRINTING A4 SHEETS AT HOME

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Gillian Crowther, Admissions & Ecommerce Manager, Historic Environment Scotland.



**“Wherever we are reducing
our environmental impact, it is
welcomed and celebrated.”**

Katie Carter, Circular Economy Project
Officer, Historic Environment Scotland

Want to know more?

For more information on Historic Environment Scotland's project to reduce paper waste and litter, or their Litter prevention Action Plan more generally, please contact:

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