



Annual Report of the West of Scotland Archaeology Service 2025/2026

Summary

This annual report covers the period from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. During the report period, the Service dealt with 1828 new casework items. This was 4.1% fewer than in the previous year. This was predominantly a result of variations in the number of casework items arising from external consultations and requests to the Service.

A total of 615 weekly lists of planning applications registered with the Councils and with the Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority were monitored for potential archaeological impacts. This essential element of the Service's work identifies applications raising potential archaeological issues which have not been fully dealt with at the pre-application stage so they can be considered further as required. This monitoring of the weekly lists, along with direct consultations from planning officers, identified 735 new planning applications which required additional detailed assessment, a statistically insignificant 1.8% increase on the previous year's total.

In addition to this core activity on new planning applications, a further 478 new casework items of other types were opened during the reporting period, approximately 15% fewer than in the previous year, largely due to reductions in forestry consultations and enquiries from Statutory Undertakers.

Table 1. New Casework 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

Council Area	Total of New Casework Items	Weekly lists	Planning Applications	Other
Argyll & Bute	394	49	176	169
East Ayrshire	163	54	75	34
East Dunbartonshire	101	50	36	15
East Renfrewshire	78	53	15	10
Glasgow	148	49	68	31
North Ayrshire	117	54	38	25
Renfrewshire	100	48	26	26
South Ayrshire	148	49	64	35
South Lanarkshire	229	52	112	65
West Dunbartonshire	77	54	14	9
West Lothian	139	51	60	28
National Park Authority	126	52	51	23
General/Multi-Council	8			8
Total	1828	615	735	478

The Archaeology Service of the Councils of Argyll and Bute, East Ayrshire, East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire, Glasgow City, North Ayrshire, Renfrewshire, South Ayrshire, South Lanarkshire, West Dunbartonshire, and West Lothian, and of the Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority.

New Planning Application Casework 2025-2026

The number of new planning applications identified as potentially raising archaeological issues was 1.8% greater than in the previous reporting period. This statistically insignificant year-on-year variation appears to sustain the slight reduction in the number of applications that trigger further examination which has been observed following the most recent expansion of Permitted Development rights.

Of the combined total of 735 applications which the Service staff examined in detail, 379 (approximately 52%) were assessed as raising potentially significant historic environment issues which would justify some form of archaeological intervention. With the exception of the atypical figures for the period of the Covid pandemic, the proportion of cases assessed in detail which require intervention has remained fairly stable since the introduction of the Service's award-winning archaeological impact mitigation system, which reduced officer time spent dealing with applications which would fail to meet the threshold for archaeological intervention within the Service and the planning services of member authorities.

Table 2. Summary Table of New Planning Applications 2020-2026

	Numbers of applications identified for detailed further assessment						Numbers of these then assessed as raising significant archaeological issues					
	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
Argyll & Bute	98	169	216	262	166	176	80	101	124	151	138	112
East Ayrshire	58	77	81	77	68	75	26	17	29	20	21	31
East Dunbartonshire	57	49	32	36	24	36	25	27	15	18	16	25
East Renfrewshire	38	26	17	12	10	15	16	17	9	8	7	10
Glasgow	44	49	54	57	53	68	23	21	21	12	12	26
North Ayrshire	50	46	37	54	71	38	35	25	14	22	35	21
Renfrewshire	37	30	31	33	29	26	20	17	19	18	17	15
South Ayrshire	51	77	86	71	50	64	31	29	46	27	24	26
South Lanarkshire	163	195	189	111	130	112	96	112	81	63	70	57
West Dunbartonshire	26	25	29	26	13	14	8	11	18	16	9	6
West Lothian	104	83	120	70	60	60	67	48	57	34	27	24
National Park	64	89	81	63	48	51	30	45	49	27	14	26
Total	774	915	973	872	722	735	457	470	482	416	390	379
(% raising issues)							(59%)	(51%)	(50%)	(48%)	(54%)	(52%)

Continuing Planning Application Casework 2025-2026

In addition to identifying new casework and responding to consultations from planning officers during the reporting period, the Service carried forward work on 259 planning application cases which had been initiated in earlier years. Fieldwork on 108 projects of all sizes took place within the reporting period.

The majority of consented applications with archaeological conditions require the submission of detailed project design documents for the planning authority's approval before development may commence. The Service facilitates this process by providing detailed advice to developers, their agents, and to archaeological contractors on the appropriate scale of fieldwork and standards of reporting which are required to ensure that the work secured by the developers will conform to the Councils' historic environment policies and so satisfy the attached archaeological conditions. In addition, the Service provides advice to

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Council planning staff regarding the adequacy of the work undertaken and reported on, and in determining when the thresholds for satisfying conditions have been reached.

Typically, around 40% of these continuing cases involve project planning discussions and agreements ahead of fieldwork or are related to setting the scope of post-fieldwork analysis or reporting requirements, while a greater number involve facilitating the commercial archaeological fieldwork required to implement conditions, and providing comments on the resulting reports and analysis.

The Service also actively monitors the fieldwork carried out by commercial archaeological organisations in response to planning conditions to ensure appropriate compliance. This monitoring role also provides a measure of independent quality assurance to the developers.

Other New Casework 2025-2026

In addition to casework items generated from examination of weekly lists of planning applications and through direct consultation requests from planning officer colleagues, a further 478 items of other new work of various types were initiated in the report period. (See Table 3. Below; figures for the previous year in brackets).

Table 3. Summary of Other New Casework 2025-2026

Pre-application planning enquiries	121 (132)
Permitted Development enquiries	78 (102)
Development Plan consultations	1 (1)
Policy liaison matters	6 (0)
Historic Environment Record information management matters	62 (63)
General or Historic Environment Record enquiries	12 (27)
Other Archaeological Consultations	37 (23)
Scottish Forestry consultations, advice to commercial forestry agents	161 (217)
Other (includes items sent in error)	0 (0)
Total	478 (565)

As has been the case in previous years, the proportion of new casework items in the different categories has varied in comparison to earlier reporting periods. After last year's substantial increase in consultations from Scottish Forestry and in requests for advice from statutory undertakers, casework generated in both these categories has now reverted to more typical, lower levels. The overall number of casework items in the "Other New Casework" categories has now fallen back to around the average level recorded previously.

Pre-application planning enquiries

The modest but sustained rise in pre-application enquiries to the Service since such early engagement was further encouraged in recent changes to the planning system has been maintained at a similar level. The sustained level of early engagement indicates the value attached to such enquiries by developers seeking to forestall possible delays in the determination of their applications and by the commercial archaeological consultants and contractors when preparing supporting documentation for their clients.

Permitted development enquiries

The annual number of advance enquiries from statutory undertakers for Historic Environment Record data and for advice on the need for mitigation measures on their projects continues to be highly variable across the different industry sectors. These enquirers to the Service seek advice on how best to implement their own organisation's policies for the protection of the historic environment should this Service consider their proposed works to pose a potential threat to known or suspected archaeological remains.

Policy matters, professional standards and guidance, and liaison with other bodies

During the reporting period, the Service contributed to discussions at national level on how to build on the results of the recently concluded ten-year project supporting the development of *Scotland's Historic Environment Data Strategy* (SHED Strategy), the collaborative national strategy for the collation, management and exchange of historic environment data.

Through membership of the Scottish HER Forum, the Service represented the interests of the member councils in discussions on national data standards and collaborative working patterns between the local authority HERs and other bodies including Historic Environment Scotland (HES), the Treasure Trove Unit (TTU), and the Local Government Improvement Service, specifically its Spatial Hub.

The Service continued to represent the interests of the member councils on an Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (ALGAO) working group on the delivery of the aims of *Scotland's Archaeology Strategy*, promoted by HES, and contributed to workshops and consultations in relation to HES's development of its own corporate policies, Scottish national heritage policy, policies relating to heritage designations, and the content and scope of specialist guidance documents for Managing Change in the Historic Environment.

Through membership of the devolved Scottish sub-group within ALGAO (ALGAO:Scotland), and its 'observer status' at meetings of the Built Environment Forum Scotland (BEFS), the Service was able to provide information and advice relevant to the roles and responsibilities of the WoSAS member councils, so as to better inform the discussions of BEFS member organisations.

During the reporting period, the Service provided the 'curatorial member' to the Inspection Panel of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) in the assessment of an archaeological consultancy wishing to continue to be included in CIfA's Registered Organisation scheme.

On two occasions the Service liaised with and provided advice to Police Scotland in connection with reported finds of skeletal material. In one case, the Service facilitated an archaeological intervention to recover prehistoric burial remains using a notification and call-out contract system set up and funded by Historic Environment Scotland. The second case involved the discovery of partial skeletal remains during the refurbishment of a tenement property. The Service was able to assist in assessing the potential crime scene and in establishing that the remains showed evidence of having been subject to medical or anatomical dissection for educational purposes. No grave-cut was present, and the partial remains seemed likely to have been deposited on the solum of the building between 80 to 120 years ago. Police Scotland determined that no criminal investigation was required.

During the reporting period, the Service continued its collaboration with The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and other partners by providing advice and support to two joint projects to deliver Regional Archaeological Research Frameworks for South-West Scotland and for The Clyde Valley.

Historic Environment Record matters

Continuing high levels of planning application casework have again limited the time which the Service's permanent staff could devote to updating the Historic Environment Record (HER). Despite this, a total of 69 new site records were added to the HER database by Service staff, and amendments or additions were made to a further 41 pre-existing site records. In addition, the data-cleaning process of the more than 29,000 additional records received in a download from Historic Environment Scotland in 2022 continues as the records concerned are encountered in spatial surveys for ongoing casework areas

During the reporting period 171 cross-referenced archive records were created within the HER following the receipt of reports on completed archaeological projects, and 131 archaeological event records were created. The incorporation of such records into the HER partly depends on the regularity of notifications of new fieldwork by commercial archaeological contractors and academic and amateur researchers submitted to the nationwide 'OASIS' archaeological activities reporting system, in which local Authority HER services have an important data verification and validation role.

Public engagement, training, and research assistance

During the reporting period, the staff of the Service contributed to a range of in-person and virtual research symposiums and community meetings with cross-sector groups and individuals as part of our continuing contribution to the development of Regional Archaeological Research Frameworks for South-West Scotland, involving the three Ayrshire Councils and Dumfries and Galloway Council areas, and for The Clyde Valley, involving six of our member councils and two others.

During the reporting period, the Service liaised with or assisted three local amateur archaeological or historical groups and two university departments in the preparation of local heritage fieldwork projects, research excavations, or project funding bids.

The Service also assisted a PhD candidate with the provision of data relevant to their research topic.

Agri-environment matters

While there were a substantial number of recorded agri-environment casework items during the current reporting period, the overwhelming majority of the cases were consultation requests from Scottish Forestry conservancy offices inviting comments on the historic environment impacts of forestry grant applications they had received. Responses have been provided through each planning authority's consultation response process when requested by the member council, but separate consultation responses from the Service were provided when available staff time allowed a response within the consulting authority's specified timescale.

Other requests for information and advice from commercial forestry companies and organisations have been dealt with where the chargeable fee has been accepted in line with the relevant forestry industry guidance.

As has been reported in each year since the withdrawal of centrally funded payments to Local Authority HERs which underwrote the costs of providing archaeological information and pre-application advice to forestry agents and landowners seeking public grants, there has been no significant increase in the uptake of the provision of mediated information which would help to minimise identified adverse impacts of their forestry operations on historic environment resources.

1 Running the Service

- 1.1 The Service's Joint Committee met virtually on 06 March 2026.
- 1.2 The Service's Steering Group has been in effective abeyance during the Covid-19 pandemic and the recovery period. Management issues arising during the reporting period have been dealt with by the host authority, and through the exchange of emails with Steering Group members as required.
- 1.3 The balance in the Service's reserve account at Financial Year end stood at £153,196 (see Appendix 2). The level of financial reserves at the financial year end was lower than had been predicted in budget forecasts due to uncertainty over the length of the delay in being able to fill the vacant Senior Archaeologist post, and because of the higher than predicted audit costs associated with re-synchronising the reporting schedule to that expected under current regulations. The level of financial reserves is kept under annual review as specified in the Service's approved Reserves Policy.
- 1.4 Over the current reporting period, the Service received £15,300 for the provision of archaeological information and advice to developers and their agents. After a review of the level of fees and charges levied through the Service's *Access to Information and Charging Policy*, the Joint Committee agreed a range of increased charges for the provision of information and advice to commercial customers at their meeting on 06 March 2026.
- 1.5 Continuing a pattern reported on in the preceding three years, there has been no significant uptake from forestry agents for archaeological information and advice since centrally funded transitional payments for the provision of such advice and information were phased out. Similar outcomes have been noted by other local authorities across Scotland who are unable or unwilling to undertake this work without additional external resources. This diminution in the range of mediated information available for planning environmentally sustainable forestry operations is a matter of concern which continues to be raised with national agencies.
- 1.6 Staffing levels within the Service were restored in September 2025 following the successful recruitment of the Senior Archaeologist at the West Yorkshire Archaeology Advisory Service who brings a wealth of experience of urban and rural archaeology and a broad range of thematic expertise to our team.

2 Historic Environment Record Maintenance and Development

- 2.1 During the report period 69 new site records were added to the Historic Environment Record (HER) database, 41 pre-existing site records were amended, 131 archaeological events records were added, and the HER was informed of the commencement of 108 new fieldwork events. Following the receipt of reports on previous archaeological projects 171 digital archive records were also created.
- 2.2 In addition to the above, work continued to filter and verify the details of more than 29,000 records the Service received from Historic Environment Scotland in 2022. This significant addition to the WoSAS HER was an automated download from the national agency's "Canmore" archive. Although a large quantity of valuable data has been added to the HER, an unknown number of these records are equivalents of records already in our system, having been reported to this Service and to Historic Environment Scotland separately by third parties in the past. Historic Environment Scotland were unable to provide the data in a format that allowed equivalent records to be automatically identified before importation, so a detailed manual data-cleaning process is required to filter and edit the added records. This work is ongoing but unfortunately cannot be easily or accurately quantified with the analytical tools available to the staff working on the HER database.
- 2.3 The Service's website (<http://www.wosas.net>) was updated twice over the report period and when staff resources allow, preparatory work continues on a re-design to allow a re-launch bringing the online content up to date with procedural changes and the requirements of the *Scottish Historic Environment Data Strategy* (SHED Strategy). Unfortunately, the website usage statistics for the first six months of the reporting period are not available. Nevertheless, during the last six months of the reporting period, the Service website received 50,815 visits and 86,822 page views.
- 2.4 The Service continued its liaison role with the national heritage agencies and data providers as the member Councils' representative on the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (ALGAO), and the associated HER Forum Scotland (formerly known as the SMR Forum Scotland). WoSAS continued to contribute to national initiatives on a cost-neutral basis to ensure that the shared data sources which are being developed under the SHED Strategy meet the needs of the WoSAS member Councils. During the reporting period, HER data was provided to Historic Environment Scotland for uploading to their *Pastmap* website, and information on chance finds was provided to the HER by the Treasure Trove Unit..
- 2.5 The Service has consolidated its engagement with the Spatial Information team of the Local Authority Improvement Service and their Spatial Hub website, which provides public access to environmental spatial data to ensure that Councils comply with the legal requirements of the INSPIRE (Scotland) 2009 Regulations. The Spatial Hub is designed to allow local authorities to meet their statutory responsibilities to provide full public access to all spatial data held by them or on their behalf without having to set up their own INSPIRE-compliant internet portals. By updating the Spatial Hub with collated and curated HER data WoSAS has assisted each of the member councils to meet this legal requirement without the need to allocate additional resources.
- 2.6 During the reporting period, the Service assisted or liaised with three local amateur archaeological or historical groups and two university departments in the preparation of local heritage fieldwork projects or funding bids
- 2.7 Service staff assisted a PhD candidate with the provision of data for their research topic.

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3 Advice to Argyll and Bute Council

Development Management Advice

- 3.1 Over the report period 49 weekly lists of planning applications from the Council were monitored by the Service and 176 new planning applications were identified as raising potential archaeological issues. In addition, further work was done in respect of 62 planning applications which had been submitted in previous years.
- 3.2 The 176 identified new planning applications were assessed by the Service in terms of Policy 7 and linked guidance in National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and the Local Development Plan. Of the 176 applications, 155 (88.1%) were actioned within 21 days (our performance standard is 80%), with the results set out in the table below:

	Total of cases
Refusal of planning application recommended	1
Archaeological assessment or evaluation prior to determination required	15
Negative suspensive condition requiring archaeological excavation	46
Archaeological watching brief condition required	34
Standing buildings survey condition	3
Avoidance/protection within, or to side of development	6
Refer to Historic Environment Scotland (Scheduled or Listed asset)	7
No issue, or no action possible	64
Totals	176

Altogether, 112 of the 176 planning applications (63.6%) identified for detailed assessment required some form of response to address the potential impacts of the proposals on archaeological remains.

Other Advice within the Council's Area

- 3.3 During the report period advice was provided to a variety of clients, including Council staff, in respect of 169 other items of casework, including 19 pre-application enquiries, 11 HER site information queries or public enquiries, and 56 enquiries from statutory undertakers, predominantly from Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks.

4 Advice to East Ayrshire Council

Development Management Advice

- 4.1 Over the report period 54 weekly lists of planning applications from the Council were monitored by the Service and 75 new planning applications were identified as raising potential archaeological issues. In addition, further work was done in respect of 16 planning applications which had been submitted in previous years.
- 4.2 The 75 identified new planning applications were assessed by the Service in terms of Policy 7 and linked guidance in National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and the Local Development Plan. Of the 75 applications, 67 (89.3%) were actioned within 21 days (our performance standard is 80%), with the results set out in the table below:

	Total of cases
Refusal of planning application recommended	1
Archaeological assessment or evaluation prior to determination required	11
Negative suspensive condition requiring archaeological excavation	15
Archaeological watching brief condition required	2
Avoidance/protection within, or to side of development	2
No issue, or no action possible	44
Totals	75

Altogether, 31 of the 75 planning applications (41.3%) identified for detailed assessment required some form of response to address the potential impacts of the proposals on archaeological remains.

Other Advice within the Council's Area

- 4.3 During the report period advice was provided to a variety of clients, including Council staff, in respect of 34 other items of casework, including 12 pre-application enquiries, and 1 HER site information query.
- 4.4 During the report period the manager of the Service also represented the Council on the Steering Group for the development of the South West Scotland Archaeological Research Framework (SWSARF).

5 Advice to East Dunbartonshire Council

Development Management Advice

- 5.1 Over the report period 50 weekly lists of planning applications from the Council were monitored by the Service and 36 new planning applications were identified as raising potential archaeological issues. In addition, further work was done in respect of 9 planning applications which had been submitted in previous years.
- 5.2 The 36 identified new planning applications were assessed by the Service in terms of Policy 7 and linked guidance in National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and the Local Development Plan. Of the 36 applications, 35 (97.2%) were actioned within 21 days (our performance standard is 80%), with the results set out in the table below:

	Total of cases
Refusal of planning application recommended	2
Archaeological assessment or evaluation prior to determination required	6
Negative suspensive condition requiring archaeological excavation	6
Archaeological watching brief condition required	6
Refer to Historic Environment Scotland (Scheduled or Listed asset)	5
No issue, or no action possible	11
Totals	36

Altogether, 25 of the 36 planning applications (69.4%) identified for detailed assessment required some form of response to address the potential impacts of the proposals on archaeological remains.

Other Advice within the Council's Area

- 5.3 During the report period advice was provided to a variety of clients, including Council staff, in respect of 15 other items of casework, including 9 pre-application enquiries, 1 HER site information query, and 1 enquiry from a statutory undertaker.
- 5.4 During the report period the manager of the Service also represented the Council on the Antonine Wall Research Group.
- 5.5 During the report period the staff of the Service also represented the Council on the Steering Group for the development of the Clyde Valley Archaeological Research Framework (CVARF).

6 Advice to East Renfrewshire Council

Development Management Advice

- 6.1 Over the report period 53 weekly lists of planning applications from the Council were monitored by the Service and 15 new planning applications were identified as raising potential archaeological issues. In addition, further work was done in respect of 9 planning applications which had been submitted in previous years.
- 6.2 The 15 identified new planning applications were assessed by the Service in terms of Policy 7 and linked guidance in National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and the Local Development Plan. Of the 15 applications, 12 (80%) were actioned within 21 days (our performance standard is 80%), with the results set out in the table below:

	Total of cases
Archaeological assessment or evaluation prior to determination required	2
Negative suspensive condition requiring archaeological excavation	6
Archaeological watching brief condition required	2
No issue, or no action possible	5
Totals	15

Altogether, 10 of the 15 planning applications (66.7%) identified for detailed assessment required some form of response to address the potential impacts of the proposals on archaeological remains.

Other Advice within the Council's Area

- 6.3 During the report period advice was provided to a variety of clients, including Council staff, in respect of 10 other items of casework, including 3 pre-application enquiries, 5 HER site information queries or public enquiries, and 1 enquiry from a statutory undertaker.
- 6.4 During the report period the staff of the Service also represented the Council on the Steering Group for the development of the Clyde Valley Archaeological Research Framework (CVARF).

7 Advice to Glasgow City Council

Development Management Advice

- 7.1 Over the report period 49 weekly lists of planning applications from the Council were monitored by the Service and 68 new planning applications were identified as raising potential archaeological issues. In addition, further work was done in respect of 15 planning applications which had been submitted in previous years.
- 7.2 The 68 identified new planning applications were assessed by the Service in terms of Policy 7 and linked guidance in National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and the Local Development Plan. Of the 68 applications, 56 (82.4%) were actioned within 21 days (our performance standard is 80%), with the results set out in the table below:

	Total of cases
Refusal of planning application recommended	2
Archaeological assessment or evaluation prior to determination required	7
Negative suspensive condition requiring archaeological excavation	9
Archaeological watching brief condition required	3
Refer to Historic Environment Scotland (Scheduled or Listed asset)	5
No issue, or no action possible	33
Totals	68

Altogether, 26 of the 68 planning applications (38.2%) identified for detailed assessment required some form of response to address the potential impacts of the proposals on archaeological remains.

Other Advice within the Council's Area

- 7.3 During the report period advice was provided to a variety of clients, including Council staff, in respect of 31 other items of casework, including 9 pre-application enquiries, 13 HER site information queries or public enquiries, and 1 enquiry regarding statutory undertakings.
- 7.4 During the report period the manager of the Service also represented the Council on the Antonine Wall Research Group.
- 7.5 During the report period the staff of the Service also represented the Council on the Steering Group for the development of the Clyde Valley Archaeological Research Framework (CVARF).

8 Advice to North Ayrshire Council

Development Management Advice

- 8.1 Over the report period 54 weekly lists of planning applications from the Council were monitored by the Service and 38 new planning applications were identified as raising potential archaeological issues. In addition, further work was done in respect of 12 planning applications which had been submitted in previous years.
- 8.2 The 38 identified new planning applications were assessed by the Service in terms of Policy 7 and linked guidance in National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and the Local Development Plan. Of the 38 applications, 36 (94.7%) were actioned within 21 days (our performance standard is 80%), with the results set out in the table below:

	Total of cases
Archaeological assessment or evaluation prior to determination required	8
Negative suspensive condition requiring archaeological excavation	7
Archaeological watching brief condition required	5
Avoidance/protection within, or to side of development	1
No issue, or no action possible	17
Totals	38

Altogether, 21 of the 38 planning applications (55.3%) identified for detailed assessment required some form of response to address the potential impacts of the proposals on archaeological remains.

Other Advice within the Council's Area

- 8.3 During the report period advice was provided to a variety of clients, including Council staff, in respect of 25 other items of casework, including 5 pre-application enquiries, 3 HER site information queries or public enquiries, and 7 enquiries from statutory undertakers.
- 8.4 During the report period the manager of the Service also represented the Council on the Steering Group for the development of the South West Scotland Archaeological Research Framework (SWSARF).

9 Advice to Renfrewshire Council

Development Management Advice

- 9.1 Over the report period 48 weekly lists of planning applications from the Council were monitored by the Service and 26 new planning applications were identified as raising potential archaeological issues. In addition, further work was done in respect of 6 planning applications which had been submitted in previous years.
- 9.2 The 26 identified new planning applications were assessed by the Service in terms of Policy 7 and linked guidance in National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and the Local Development Plan. Of the 26 applications, 24 (92.3%) were actioned within 21 days (our performance standard is 80%), with the results set out in the table below:

	Total of cases
Refusal of planning application recommended	1
Archaeological assessment or evaluation prior to determination required	5
Negative suspensive condition requiring archaeological excavation	5
Archaeological watching brief condition required	2
Refer to Historic Environment Scotland (Scheduled or Listed asset)	2
No issue, or no action possible	11
Totals	26

Altogether, 15 of the 26 planning (57.7%) applications identified for detailed assessment required some form of response to address the potential impacts of the proposals on archaeological remains.

Other Advice within the Council's Area

- 9.3 During the report period advice was provided to a variety of clients, including Council staff, in respect of 26 other items of casework, including 12 pre-application enquiries, 4 HER site information queries or public enquiries, and 2 enquiries from statutory undertakers.
- 9.4 During the report period the staff of the Service also represented the Council on the Steering Group for the development of the Clyde Valley Archaeological Research Framework (CVARF).

10 Advice to South Ayrshire Council

Development Management Advice

- 10.1 Over the report period 49 weekly lists of planning applications from the Council were monitored by the Service and 64 new planning applications were identified as raising potential archaeological issues. In addition, further work was done in respect of 8 planning applications which had been submitted in previous years.
- 10.2 The 64 new planning applications were assessed by the Service in terms of Policy 7 and linked guidance in National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4). Of the 64 applications, 57 (89.1%) were actioned within 21 days (our performance standard is 80%), with the results set out in the table below:

	Total of cases
Archaeological assessment or evaluation prior to determination required	9
Negative suspensive condition requiring archaeological excavation	9
Archaeological watching brief condition required	6
Refer to Historic Environment Scotland (Scheduled or Listed asset)	2
No issue, or no action possible	38
Totals	64

Altogether, 26 of the 64 planning applications (40.6%) identified for detailed assessment required some form of response to address the potential impacts of the proposals on archaeological remains.

Other Advice within the Council's Area

- 10.3 During the report period advice was provided to a variety of clients, including Council staff, in respect of 35 other items of casework, which included 7 pre-application enquiries, 4 HER site information queries or public enquiries, and 1 enquiry from a statutory undertaker.
- 10.4 During the report period the manager of the Service also represented the Council on the Steering Group for the development of the South West Scotland Archaeological Research Framework (SWSARF).

11 Advice to South Lanarkshire Council

Development Management Advice

- 11.1 Over the report period 52 weekly lists of planning applications from the Council were monitored by the Service and 112 new planning applications were identified as raising potential archaeological issues. In addition, further work was done in respect of 59 planning applications which had been submitted in previous years.
- 11.2 The 112 new planning applications were assessed by the Service in terms of Policy 7 and linked guidance in National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4). Of the 112 applications, 104 (92.9%) were actioned within 21 days (our performance standard is 80%), with the results set out in the table below:

	Total of cases
Archaeological assessment or evaluation prior to determination required	14
Negative suspensive condition requiring archaeological excavation	29
Archaeological watching brief condition required	12
Standing buildings survey condition	1
Avoidance/protection within, or to side of development	1
No issue, or no action possible	55
Totals	112

Altogether, 57 of the 112 planning applications (50.9%) identified for detailed assessment required some form of response to address the potential impacts of the proposals on archaeological remains.

Other Advice in the Council's Area

- 11.3 During the report period advice was provided to a variety of clients, including Council staff, in respect of 65 other items of casework, including 32 pre-application enquiries, 4 HER site information queries or public enquiries, and 3 enquiries from statutory undertakers.
- 11.4 During the report period the staff of the Service also represented the Council on the Steering Group for the development of the Clyde Valley Archaeological Research Framework (CVARF).

12 Advice to West Dunbartonshire Council

Development Management Advice

- 12.1 Over the report period 54 weekly lists of planning applications from the Council were monitored by the Service and 14 new planning applications were identified as raising potential archaeological issues. In addition, further work was done in respect of 9 planning applications which had been submitted in previous years.
- 12.2 The 14 identified new planning applications were assessed by the Service in terms of Policy 7 and linked guidance in National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4). Of the 14 applications, 12 (85.7%) were actioned within 21 days (our performance standard is 80%), with the results set out in the table below:

	Total of cases
Archaeological assessment or evaluation prior to determination required	2
Negative suspensive condition requiring archaeological excavation	1
Archaeological watching brief condition required	2
Standing buildings survey condition	1
No issue, or no action possible	8
Totals	14

Altogether, 6 of the 14 planning applications (42.9%) identified for detailed assessment required some form of response to address the potential impacts of the proposals on archaeological remains.

Other Advice within the Council's Area

- 12.3 During the report period advice was provided to a variety of clients, including Council staff, in respect of 9 other items of casework, comprising 2 pre-application enquiries, and 1 HER site information query.
- 12.4 During the report period the manager of the Service also represented the Council on the Antonine Wall Research Group.
- 12.5 During the report period the staff of the Service also represented the Council on the Steering Group for the development of the Clyde Valley Archaeological Research Framework (CVARF).

13 Advice to West Lothian Council

Development Management Advice

- 13.1 Over the report period 51 weekly lists of planning applications from the Council were monitored by the Service and 60 new planning applications were identified as raising potential archaeological issues. In addition, further work was done in respect of 14 planning applications which had been submitted in previous years.
- 13.2 The 60 new planning applications were assessed by the Service in terms of Policy 7 and linked guidance in National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4). Of the 60 applications, 52 (86.7%) were actioned within 21 days (our performance standard is 80%), with the results set out in the table below:

	Total of cases
Archaeological assessment or evaluation prior to determination required	8
Negative suspensive condition requiring archaeological excavation	11
Archaeological watching brief condition required	4
Standing buildings survey condition	1
No issue, or no action possible	36
Totals	60

Altogether, 24 of the 60 planning applications (40.0%) identified for detailed assessment required some form of response to address the potential impacts of the proposals on archaeological remains.

Other Advice within the Council's Area

- 13.3 During the report period advice was provided to a variety of clients, including Council staff, in respect of 28 other items of casework, including 9 pre-application enquiries, 1 HER site information query, and 1 enquiry from a statutory undertaker.

14 Advice to the Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority

- 14.1 Archaeological advice is provided to the National Park Authority planning service under the terms of a chargeable Service Level Agreement covering the whole of the National Park area. In the year 2022-23 the National Park Authority paid £16,667 to the Service for archaeological planning advice, and other historic environment advice.

Development Management Advice

- 14.2 Over the report period 52 weekly lists of planning applications from the Council were monitored by the Service and 51 new planning applications were identified as raising potential archaeological issues. In addition, further work was done in respect of 8 planning applications which had been submitted in previous years.
- 14.3. The 51 identified new planning applications were assessed by the Service in terms of Policy 7 and linked guidance in National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4). Of the 51 applications, 46 (90.2%) were actioned within 21 days (our performance standard is 80%), with the results set out in the table below:

	Total of cases
Refusal of planning application recommended	1
Archaeological assessment or evaluation prior to determination required	9
Negative suspensive condition requiring archaeological excavation	4
Archaeological watching brief condition required	8
Avoidance/protection within, or to side of development	2
Refer to Historic Environment Scotland (Scheduled or Listed asset)	2
No issue, or no action possible	25
Totals	51

Altogether, 26 of the 51 planning applications (51.0%) identified for detailed assessment required some form of response to address the potential impacts of the proposals on archaeological remains.

Other Advice within the National Park Authority's Area

- 14.4 During the report period advice was provided to a variety of clients, including National Park Authority staff, in respect of 23 other items of casework including 2 pre-application enquiries, 12 forestry consultations, 3 HER site information queries or public enquiries, and 7 enquiries from statutory undertakers.
- 14.6 During the report period the manager of the Service also represented the National Park Authority in online discussions with other members of the National Parks Historic Environment Working Group and contributed to discussions on national historic environment policy matters relevant to the Park.

15 Information and Advice to Developers/Agents and to Statutory Undertakers

- 15.1 There were 121 requests for pre-application information and advice from developers or their agents during the reporting period. Of these, 90 included a request for a Historic Environment Record digital extract to assist in preparing reports and supporting statements for the developer. In addition, detailed advice on the implementation of planning conditions was provided to archaeological consultants and contractors working for developers on 114 cases where planning permission had been granted in previous years.
- 15.2 The Service received 78 requests for assistance in connection with proposed utility infrastructure works by Scottish Water and by energy and telecommunications companies. These enquiries were generally seeking information on the archaeological sensitivity of route options and advice to assist the statutory undertakers in implementing their own policies for the protection of the historic environment while operating under Permitted Development rights. During the latest reporting period, the majority of these enquiries came from one organization, Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks, whose Wayleave Officers seek historic environment information and advice on their infrastructure works in an exemplary fashion.
- 15.3 In those cases where archaeological information or advice was provided or where fieldwork interventions were recommended, relevant fees were levied by the Service through its approved *Access to Information and Charging Policy*.
- 15.4 During the reporting period the provision of assistance to developers and their agents in accordance with the WoSAS *Access to Information and Charging Policy* generated £15,300 income for the Service.

16 Agri-Environment Advice

- 16.1 There is clear guidance from Scottish Forestry (formerly the Forestry Authority) recommending that forestry grant applicants secure archaeological information and advice on how to address the possible cultural heritage impacts of their planting proposals from local authority HER services, and that any costs of commissioning such advice can be met from grant funding. Nevertheless, landowners and agents have generally been reluctant to commission the provision of such information and advice from the Service since the introduction of charges to replace centrally funded payments to the Service which were made to underwrite the costs of providing the information and advice to the applicants.
- 16.2 Except in cases lying within the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park area, where the National Park Authority has itself underwrites the costs of providing such advice to forestry agents planning new forestry projects or felling proposals, and in cases where fuller details have been requested by a member authority as a contribution to their own forestry consultation response, requests for comments or advice on the adequacy of archaeological provisions of new forestry proposals received from Scottish Forestry have been briefly answered with basic information in the form of an issue check, whereby immediately identifiable issues are flagged up for the attention of Scottish Forestry as the relevant regulatory authority for the forestry industry.

Appendix 1

Annual Performance Statistics 2025-26 (figures for the previous year in brackets for comparison)

Monitoring of Weekly lists of planning applications

The performance standard in the WoSAS Service Level Agreement for this area of work is for **90%** to be monitored and actioned within 14 calendar days of receipt.

Performance	99.02%	(97.39%)
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Planning and Listed Building Consultations

The performance standard in the WoSAS Service Level Agreement for this area of work is for **80%** to be actioned within 21 calendar days of receipt.

Planning Applications

Argyll & Bute	88.07%	(83.73%)
East Ayrshire	89.35%	(89.71%)
East Dunbartonshire	97.22%	(95.83%)
East Renfrewshire	80.00%	(100.00%)
Glasgow City	82.35%	(88.68%)
North Ayrshire	94.74%	(88.73%)
Renfrewshire	92.31%	(93.10%)
South Ayrshire	89.06%	(84.00%)
South Lanarkshire	92.86%	(95.38%)
West Dunbartonshire	85.71%	(84.62%)
West Lothian	86.67%	(91.67%)
Loch Lomond & The Trossachs	90.20%	(97.92%)
Overall Planning Application Performance	89.27%	(89.89%)

Other Work Areas

The performance standard for this area of work is for **80%** to be actioned within 21 calendar days of receipt.

Pre-Application Enquiries	95.05%	(98.40%)
Permitted Dev't/Statutory Undertakings	91.03%	(97.94%)
General/HER Enquiries	91.67%	(92.59%)
Other Archaeological Consultations	94.59%	(91.30%)
SF Consultations/Forestry Casework	86.96%	(91.15%)
Overall Other Work Performance	91.20%	(94.38%)

The Archaeology Service of the Councils of Argyll and Bute, East Ayrshire, East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire, Glasgow City, North Ayrshire, Renfrewshire, South Ayrshire, South Lanarkshire, West Dunbartonshire, and West Lothian, and of the Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority.

Appendix 2

WEST OF SCOTLAND ARCHAEOLOGY SERVICE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR TO 31 MARCH 2026

2024/25 £		2025/26 £
	<u>Income</u>	
138,090	Contribution from participating authorities	138,090
30,367	Fees & Charges	31,968
6,214	Interest on balances	5,304
<u>174,671</u>	Total Income	<u>175,362</u>
	<u>Expenditure</u>	
	<u>Employee Costs</u>	
140,772	Salaries, National Insurance, Superannuation and related costs	167,099
	<u>Administration Costs</u>	
200	Fees and subscriptions	200
0	Travel and subsistence	0
3,000	IT maintenance and equipment	3,160
0	Purchase of services	0
7,390	Rents	7,390
2,579	Audit fee	13,967
<u>153,941</u>	Total Expenditure	<u>191,816</u>
(20,730)	(Surplus) or deficit for year	16,454
(148,920)	(Surplus) brought forward	(169,650)
<u>(169,650)</u>	Accumulated (surplus) or deficit	<u>(153,196)</u>

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