

The Highland Council Development and Infrastructure Service

Report on Highland Archaeology Festival 2018



Prepared by Archaeology for Communities in the Highlands (ARCH)

The Goods Shed, The Old Station, Strathpeffer IV14 9DH

info@archhighland.org.uk

077888 35466

www.archhighland.org.uk



• Highland Archaeology Festival •
Fèis Arc-eòlais na Gàidhealtachd

1.0 Summary

- 123 events and 22 special exhibitions were offered during HAF, making a total of 145 offerings.
- Over 10,000 people took part with numbers ranging from 2 to over 900 per event.
- 97% rated the events as excellent or very good, up from 94% last year.
- The conference in the middle of the festival was well attended, with very good feedback. It was slightly busier than in previous years, with 167 attendees. On Saturday the Council Chamber was full.
- This year the festival also featured
 - a photographic competition inviting entries on reuse of our heritage.
 - an expanded geocache trail with entries in all areas of the Highlands which has continued to publicise local heritage to people, some of whom had not known about HAF before.
 - an Adopt-an-HER record initiative intended to get more people to use and update the HER.
- The festival attracted people from outwith the Highlands. At the conference alone, 27% came from outwith the Highlands and Moray. Organisers reported foreign visitors from the U.S.A., Australia, the Netherlands, Germany and France. Events on the NC500 in particular appear to have attracted visitors from afar.

Altogether it was another very successful festival, with an interesting mix of events and good attendance. It clearly is a much anticipated and popular event, and the biggest of its kind in Scotland.

“The festival is going from strength to strength. It is quite varied and widespread. Long may it continue!”

“The conference was brilliant - I have attended for over 10 years and this was the best ever! Congratulations to everyone involved.”

“A brilliant combination, extraordinary depth and vision.”



2.0 Overview

2.1 The Highland Archaeology Festival (HAF) is co-ordinated by The Highland Council's Historic Environment Team with the aim of using the archaeological resources of the Highlands to enable communities to participate in and benefit from their heritage. As such the festival clearly relates to one of them main aims of Scotland's Archaeology Strategy (2015): Encouraging Greater Engagement. Coordination and promotion were undertaken by Archaeology for Communities in the Highlands (ARCH) on behalf of the Council.

2.2 The festival took place 29th September to 19th October. This year the festival was slightly extended, to ensure that some of it overlapped with the school holidays. It marked the 25th year of the festival, and is now the much anticipated heritage event in the Highlands for many individuals and groups. It is the largest regular event of this nature in Scotland.

2.3 There was the usual mix of walks, talks, workshops and exhibitions for adults and children, with the annual two-day conference this year in the middle. Events were offered by a number of organisations, large and small, and took place throughout the entire Highland Council area. The Moray area continues to provide some events, particularly Elgin Museum, and this year Kilmartin Museum in Argyll also participated.

2.4 Event organisers plan their own events, and decide if they will charge for them. The festival organisers provide advice, a risk assessment template, and some publicity.

2.5 The Historic Environment Team and ARCH this year tried to build on last year's successes:

- The website with events listings and online booking and payment for the conference is now well established and widely used.
- Keynote talks by experts to start the festival (on the 28th September) and on the Friday before the conference, held in the Council Chamber were again timetabled. Both were excellent, and Richard Bradley's on 13th October was particularly well-attended with 104 people. Donations at the door covered the travel and subsistence of the speakers. This year an additional lecture on Industrial Archaeology was held at the Council during the festival.
- An afternoon of hands-on workshops held at Council headquarters in Inverness on the Friday before the conference was again timetabled. Attendance was better this year, and there was keen interest amongst those attending.
- Returning from last year was a photographic competition, with 23 entries from 12 adults and 1 child. The shortlist was exhibited during HAF at Inverness Library and is now touring, providing publicity for the festival after it has finished.
- Also returning this year was a geocache trail designed to attract people who might not be interested in heritage. Four new caches were added to the 10 from last year, with each containing the HAF brochure, HAF badges and leaflets of local interest. They continue to attract attention.

2.6 In addition, the festival introduced an Adopt-an-HER record initiative, designed to get people to use and contribute to the Highland Environment Record. Feedback showed that few people knew about it, and next year better publicity will be needed. This initiative can go year round.

2.7 The museum trail in 2017 was not a success. As a result, this year we asked museums to send us their opening hours during HAF, and we published these and contact details. Forty-nine museums and archives responded with details.

3.0 Analysis of events

3.1 The HAF 2018 brochure listed 125 individual events and exhibitions taking place during the festival fortnight. The 22 special exhibitions ran for a period of time during the festival, sometimes only a few days, others for the full period, but in calculations here are treated as one event. In addition, 20 events were too late for the brochure and were listed only on the website (most of these are excavation days at Clachtoll broch). This resulted in 145 events. However, 3 events were cancelled due to insufficient bookings, weather or unavailability of organiser. Therefore in total 142 events took place. This is slightly lower than in 2017, because while there were more regular events, there was no museum object trail this year. Nineteen self-guided trails were also promoted. There was effort to attract new audiences with the geocache trail and exhibitions in non-heritage venues such as village halls.

3.2 During HAF, events (including exhibitions) take place throughout the Highland Council area and stretching into Moray and Argyll.

Area	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Caithness, Sutherland, E. Ross (total / % for year)	6 21 26 (53 / 37%)	5 12 44 (61 / 40%)	7 16 33 (56 / 34%)			
W.Ross, Skye, Lochaber (total / % for year)	8 6 9 (23 / 16%)	8 4 7 (19 / 12%)	16 2 6 (24 / 14%)			
Inverness & Inverness-shire Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey (total / % for year)	43 2 4 (49 / 34%)	47 4 13 (64 / 42%)	23 23 2 26 (74 / 44%)			
Outwith the area Moray Argyll (total / % for year)	16 4 (20 / 14%)	4 5 (9; 6%)	12 (12; 7%)			
Multi-area (total / % for year)	0	0	1 (1 / 1%)	0	0	(4 / 3%)
TOTALS	(145 / 100%)	(153 / 100%)	(167 / 100%)	(133 / 100%)	(207 / 100%)	(117 / 100%)

Note: 2018 excludes the 3 cancelled events. Previous years' figures from previous reports.

3.1 Of the areas, Nairn, Caithness and Skye continue to be least represented, despite efforts to get more events offered in these areas. In Nairn's case, the area is so small, and there are few groups and museums. But there remains scope to encourage more events from these areas in the future. Badenoch and Strathspey was well represented in 2017, but some organisers felt there were insufficient bookings to offer again in 2018, or the messages did not reach people within the organisation. Lochaber had more entries than last year, but most of these were museum-based, as was the case for Moray.

3.2 The HAF mailing list has around 100 heritage organisations and 50 museums which are approached to offer an event. Some organisations said they could not offer anything this year, but might in the future. As last year, there was some feedback from organisations offering tours of buildings that they felt they could not do both Doors Open Day in September and HAF in October. The Countryside rangers are now part of High Life Highland, and only two rangers offered events, others saying they could not plan so far in the future.

3.3 Few individuals offered events, and the concerns with insurance remain a hurdle. Costs for individual public liability insurance remain prohibitive.

3.4 The vast majority of events (84%) were offered as free, but with donations welcome, or with a suggested donation. This is up from 73% in 2017. The more established museums were more likely to charge for their events.

3.5 52% of the events were advertised by their organisers as being accessible to people with disabilities. The figures for 2018 are down from 2017 which had 63%.

3.6 Organisers were asked if their events were suitable for children accompanied by adults or aimed specifically at children. Of those who replied 48% were suitable for accompanied children and 14% were children's activities. This is lower than in 2017 (69% for children accompanied by adults and 16% children's activities). Museums and event organisers reported over 1200 children attending HAF events, most of these at exhibitions. This is more than 2017. But in all cases the data is incomplete, based on estimates and with some key events not reported. The events held during the school holidays were generally reported as well attended.

3.7 Hands-on workshops on the Friday before the conference at the Council headquarters were a new innovation in 2016 and repeated this year. Although attendance was slightly better than last year (around 18 people), it was still small. Feedback however was positive, with everyone rating the organisation and content as excellent. Workshop leaders either gave their time or were offered a place at the conference, and donations were collected from participants.

3.8 The keynote lectures were organised again this year. Martin Goldberg of the NMS opened the festival with a talk on the Glenmorangie Project, which sponsored a whisky reception afterwards. During HAF there was a talk by Mark Watson of HES on industrial archaeology in the Highlands which had a good turnout as well. However, Professor

Richard Bradley's talk before the conference was very popular with over 100 attendees. Talks were advertised with a suggested donation of £3 per person, and netted £472.88 (up from £263.94 in 2017), covering the speakers' travel and subsistence.

3.9 There were 22 special exhibitions this year, the same as in 2017. These were held in museums, libraries, and village halls.

3.10 The photographic competition ran before the festival with the theme Re-using Highland Heritage. There were two categories – under 16s and 16 or older, with people invited to submit up to two entries. The competition attracted fewer entries than in 2017: 23 entries from 12 adults and one child. The National Trust for Scotland donated a top prize of a year's membership, and DigIt! again donated children's prizes of a haversack filled with various items. The reason for fewer entries this year (down from 95 entries from 55 people in 2017) may have been due to the theme which needed a bit more thought. The winning adult entry, by Martin Briscoe, is on the cover.

Entries were posted on the HAF website, and 356 people viewed the pages from end of August through 19th of October. The shortlist was displayed at Inverness Library, and is now touring other libraries. As such it is good publicity for the festival outwith the festival itself. All entrants have agreed that their pictures can be used on the HER and for future publicity, thereby ensuring some good images for future brochures and the website.

4.0 Event Attendees: Numbers and Origins

4.1 We asked organisers to let us know how many people attended their event, how many of these were from outwith the Highlands and how many were children. We repeatedly chased organisers for the information, and of the 147 events which took place, information about 98 events (68%) was received, reporting almost 13,000 total attendance of which 1904 were children and at least 448 from outwith the Highlands. The totals are to some extent skewed by the Strathnairn Vintage Agricultural Display (900), but in 2017 two other events also skewed results (the Black Isle Gathering (850) and three well-attended events at Urquhart Castle (2873)). As a result, the good attendance in 2018 is significant. We are also lacking data for 10 of the exhibitions, which generally get good attendance. Some people who attended more than one event will also be counted more than once. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to assume that we had well over 10,000 people attending this year, showing the continued if not growing popularity of the festival.

4.2 The average number of people per event (for those for which we have exact data, and excluding the Strathnairn event and the exhibitions) was 26 people, slightly up from last year (21), and similar to the estimated numbers of 2016 (24) and 2015 (29); if we add in the large events and exhibitions it is 132 people per event, up from 2017 (65) and 2016 (57). Some events were extremely well attended. A weekday walk at Dalmore attracted 74 people and ARCH's crafting day had over 100 people.

4.4 It is difficult to know for certain how many people living outwith the Highlands attended HAF events. Our best data comes from the conference, where 71% were from the Highlands, 3% from Moray and 27% from outwith the Highlands. This represents an increase from 2017. Some organisers asked their attendees where they came from, and they estimated over 260 came from outwith the Highlands at events and 1200 to exhibitions. This is probably an underestimate. Foreign visitors were reported from U.S.A., Australia, the Netherlands, Germany and France. Events and museums on the NC500 continue to report greater numbers of people from outwith the Highlands.

We also asked people on their evaluation forms to list their postcode. This showed the vast majority from the Highlands, but of those outwith the Highlands, some came from as far away as southern England. The map however is also slanted towards those events where the organisers ensured feedback forms were filled in and returned. We know, for example, from conference booking forms that 44 people attending the conference were from outwith the Highlands, but the map clearly does not reflect this.



4.5 This year we linked to one large event: the Strathnairn Vintage Agricultural Rally on 29th September. It generally attracts significantly more people from outwith the Highlands, but we have no figures for this.

4.6 Many people attend more than one event. However, since the forms were sometimes handed in during the HAF fortnight, it is difficult to gauge how many events people attended. A few organisers made sure that people filled in the form on the day, and these tended to only list that one event. One respondent, however, attended 10 events during the festival. We also know anecdotally some people used more than one form.

HAF events attended	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
One event	67%	70%	72%	54%	32%
Two events	16%	11%	7%	20%	21%
Three events	6%	4%	2%	4%	26%
Four events	5%	3%	11%	4%	5%
Five or more events	6%	11%	8%	17%	16%
Total (%)	127 (100%)	114 (100%)	141 (100%)	24 (99%)	19 (100%)

Previous years' data from 2017 and 2016 reports, and reflect intended number of events rather than actual attendance. 2017 data excludes on-line feedback which didn't ask this question, and people who did not answer the question on the feedback form.

5.0 Audience Feedback

5.1 This year feedback forms were sent to each organiser for distribution and placed on chairs at events at the Council Chamber. They were also available online from the website. A survey monkey version was also available, linked to from the HAF website. A total of 145 printed responses were received, with an additional 2 survey monkey forms. This is slightly higher than in 2017 (137) and 2016 (136), and a great improvement over 2015, when only 24 responses were returned. Nevertheless it is still only a small proportion of people attending the festival events.

5.2 Questions asked were designed to allow comparison with previous surveys. In addition, people were asked if they had used the HAF website, and if they had participated in the Adopt-an-HER record scheme and the geocache trail. The forms asked people to rate statements from 1 to 5, with one being the best and 5 being the worst. This year there were no signs of people being confused by the rating scale, as we saw in 2017.

5.3 Overall Satisfaction with events

Feedback was obtained from people attending 262 events. Of these, 77% found them excellent, 19% very good, 3% satisfactory, and only 1 person rating an event poor. This is higher than 2017 and 2016, but it is difficult to compare with previous years when there were such few returns. In general satisfaction levels appear to remain at a fairly high standard over the years.

Rating of Event	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Excellent (1)	77%	66%	70%	83%	72%	68%	72%
Very Good (2)	19%	28%	22%	13%	22%	29%	25%
Satisfactory (3)	3%	2%	7%	1%	2%	2%	3%
Unsatisfactory (4)	0%	3%	1%	0	0	1%	0
Poor (5)	<1%	<1%	<1%	0	0	0	0
Total	262(100%)	258 (100%)	273 (100%)	24 (100%)	19 (100%)	100%	100%

Data for previous years from 2015, 2016, 2017 reports.

5.4 Organisation of the events

People also rated the organisation of each event.

Rating of Event %	2018	2017	2016
Excellent (1)	80%	67%	75%
Very Good (2)	17%	26%	15%
Satisfactory (3)	2%	2%	8%
Unsatisfactory (4)	0%	2%	2%
Poor (5)	<1%	2%	0
Total	100%	99%	100%

5.6 Finding out about events

People learned about events from a number of sources, and many people used more than one source. Of the 154 people who responded to this question:

- by far and away the largest number reported hearing about events from the brochure (55), though most people did not specify where they picked up the brochure.
- 34 people reported using the Highland Archaeology Festival website to find out about events. A follow up question asked people if they had used the HAF website: of the 131 people who replied to this question, 56 (43%) had not used it and 75 (57%) had consulted it. However, statistics from the website show that it was used frequently (see below 8.0).
- Word of mouth (29) and social media (15) were next most popular
- Only 1 person said that they found out about events from a local poster.
- Word of mouth remains an important source: 29 this year and 17 last year.
- 1 person found out from the newspaper.
- Local societies and museums also helped to promote, with people hearing about events from local organisations such as ARCH or NoSAS (12 people)
- And 7 people said they found out from previous year, which suggests that they found out details from one of the above means.

5.7 There was a range of feedback received on all aspects of HAF, and these can be found in Appendix 1. In general most feedback was positive.

6.0 Organiser Feedback

We invited feedback from all organisers when chasing for numbers attending the events. Few provided any comments, but those who did were generally pleased by how things had gone. Some said that they would consider offering an event again next year. In a few cases museums reported getting just passing tourists.

7.0 Conference

7.1 The ‘Recent Archaeological Discoveries and Research is a very popular part of the festival. In 2018 it took place again at the Highland Council Chamber on the last weekend of the festival (12th and 13th October). As usual there was a mixture of academics, professional contract archaeologists and community groups presenting talks, this year chaired by Professor Richard Bradley who gave an excellent keynote talk the night before, and Daniel Rhodes of NTS. The conference also had 16 displays from professional organisations, community projects and museums (slightly down from 2017, but the same as 2016). Two were new to HAF.

7.2 A total of 167 people attended the conference, 117 on both days, 72 on Saturday only and 8 on Sunday only. Of these, 125 were paying attendees. This is very similar to last year when there were 162 people (124 paying), and a marked increase in paying attendees from 2016. The chamber was full on Saturday. One person from each display organisation, Friday workshop leaders and speakers were allocated a free place as per previous years.

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Attendance	167	162	137	142	117	145	122	117

7.3 Costs for the conference this year remained £25 for both days and £15 for one day only. This included teas and coffees twice during the day. Online booking remained popular; a small surcharge of £1 per booking was added to cover the paypal costs associated with this. 64 people paid online compared to 63 last year, and 42 in 2016.

7.4 The inclusion of the poster sessions during the lunch breaks meant that there was more to keep people at the conference venue. These sessions were again popular.

7.6 71 people responded in their evaluation forms about the conference, with 72% rating it excellent, and 28% very good. This is an improvement on 2017 (56 responders) where 64% rated it excellent, 32% very good and 4% poor, as well as on 2016 (47 responders), where 68% rated it excellent, 23% very good, 4% satisfactory and 4% no data, and 2015 figures (39 respondents) where 74% listed it as excellent and 24% as good. We received a number of comments, most extremely favourable. See Appendix 1.

7.7 The sound system and hearing loops worked well this year, and there were no critical comments.

7.7 Of conference attendees 71% came from the Highlands, 2% from Moray and 27% from outwith the Highlands. This is similar to 2017 for Highland attendees, but shows a decrease from Moray and an increase in others from outwith the Highlands.

7.8 The conference payments covered the speakers’ travel and subsistence as well as venue and catering costs.

“This was my first archaeology conference as I’m just starting out. I had a brilliant time! I have learned lots and felt very welcome. Will hopefully be back next year! Planning on studying archaeology at uni, in the next few years.”

8.0 Geocache Trail

The HAF geocache trail continues to grow. One geocache from last year, at Ardvreck Castle, was withdrawn due to vandalism, but the rest continue, with West Highland Museum extremely popular (645 logged visits in the two years). Four new geocaches were hidden this year: at Glencoe Museum, Arisaig Land, Sea and Island Centre, Ferrycroft Visitor Centre, and Applecross Heritage Centre. All are listed on the geocaching website (www.geocaching.org) under the account HAF Caches. People who find the geocaches sign a log book, or post comments on the geocaching website or both.

The intent of the geocaches was to attract people who might not otherwise think themselves interested in heritage or might not know how to find out about what was happening. The comments show that the initiative succeeded, and in some cases have helped entice people into museums. The geocaches also will continue to promote HAF during the other months. The number of locations should be expanded in future years.

9.0 HAF Website

The website continues to be well used and useful, allowing events to be added, information about cancellations, fuller details than the brochure allowed, and online payment for the conference, a feature which has been particularly well-received. It also allowed events to be publicised as soon as they were confirmed. We were also able to show all the entries to the HAF photographic competition on the website.

Although only 75 (of 131 respondents) reported in feedback forms using the website, we know that it was consulted far more. Analysis of website statistics show that during the festival itself there were 1168 sessions, ranging from 19 to 115 per day. There were 3622 page views, with 892 hits to the home page, 1772 to the events calendar and 380 to the conference. There was also activity leading up to the festival, as people clearly used the website from 30/07/2017 to 19/10/2017 to find out about what was on offer: 3311 sessions, comprising 10,834 page views.

	2018	2017	2016
Sessions during festival	1168	1507	1194
Page Views	3622	4192	3579
Hits for Home Page	892	685	955
Hits for Event Calendar	1772	2492	2085
Hits for Conference Page	380	442	350
Total sessions, including leading up to the festival	3311	4188	2694
Total page views, including leading up to the festival	10834	12803	9338

9.0 HAF publicity

9.1 HAF publicity consists of a press release submitted to the main newspapers, poster templates provided to organisers (this year again allowing customisation), and the brochure which is distributed to a mailing list comprised of those who have requested to be on it, all libraries, service points, museums, secondary and primary schools, leisure centres, tourist information centres and points and a few other suggested venues. The HAF website also promoted the festival, and the Historic Environment Team and some organisations used Facebook. Digit!2017 also listed some, as did Archaeology Scotland and the What's On website. The sheer number of events offered meant that none of these other providers listed all the events, because it would have swamped their listings. Emails were also sent to the list of museums and heritage organisations asking them to promote the festival to their members. Many organisations requested large number of brochures this year to pass on to their members.

9.2 The brochure is also sent to people who have requested it in the past. To comply with GDPR regulations, we included a note telling people they had to 'opt in' to remain on the mailing list. The great majority of people have not done so. As a result, the brochure will be sent to fewer people next year, providing some savings on postage. However, it will still be available at the other outlets or by request.

9.3 The brochure clearly remains an important means of promotion, and a number of comments were received showing how much it is appreciated, and considered an essential way to find out about HAF, even for those who also use the website. Altogether this is a substantial part of the budget in terms of production and time. This year, we again included an index which listed events by region, and a separate index of events targeting children. Considerable time was spent working with the printers to get a better design, and there continues to be improvement. SPP printers undertakes to find sponsorship and ads, but fewer appeared this year, and more attention needs to be addressed to this issue.

9.4 It is clear that other methods will be needed to reach a larger audience. Feedback forms and comments suggest there are still people who did not know about the festival beforehand.

9.5 Other strategies for wider promotion should also be considered, though this will have budget implications.



Photograph of HMS Owl control tower at Fearn by Calum Roberts, winner of the children's photographic competition

10. Conclusions

10.1 The Highland Archaeology Festival remains a very popular annual event, with a loyal local audience and good support from a number of local, regional and national organisations. Numbers of events were high, and many people participated. The feedback shows 97% rated the events as excellent or very good. The success could not have been done without the many local organisations that volunteered their events – and then often participated as well.

10.2 This year we built on innovations of the last few years, but kept the festival fresh with a new photographic competition and the Adopt-an-HER record. The variety of offerings resulted in a varied and vibrant programme.

10.3 The conference continues to be a high point of the festival, with even better attendance this year, and comments that it was the best yet. It is the only platform which allows the area's archaeological research and discoveries to be shared with professionals and the public, and as such is much anticipated. The fact that over a quarter of the participants come from outwith the Highlands shows that it has a wider attraction as well.

10.4 The festival and conference continue to fit very well with The Highland Council's organisational objectives:

- supporting sustainable economic group

As noted above, HAF attracts people from outwith the Highlands, but it also encourages visitors from the Highlands to explore other areas. Some museums see it as a way to encourage people into the museum, especially at a time after the main tourist season. Some societies use it as a way to promote their organisation and gain new members.

- Delivering health and learning benefits

The range of events, inside and out, promoting the Highland's heritage provides a varied and cost-effective learning platform. The conference provides an opportunity to learn about research and fieldwork which otherwise would not be available. The hands-on workshops provided opportunities to learn new skills. Many of the events were outdoor walks, and encouraged healthy activity, hopefully encouraging people to continue to explore the rich heritage on their doorsteps.

- Protecting the natural and cultural heritage of the Highlands

The cultural heritage of the Highlands is a rich asset. By promoting local heritage, including opportunities to learn more about it, its importance will be better appreciated and protected for the future. HAF is an important aspect of the outreach work of the Highland Council Historic Environment Team – and is much appreciated by the public.

10.5 There is much to build on for 2019. We hope to expand the number of groups taking part and to encourage more people to explore museums. We want to promote the Adopt-an-HER record initiative to encourage more people to use this valuable resource. We will trial having an event on the Friday before the conference which can be used as CPD training or just for interest. We will also continue to reassess our publicity to see if we can better spread the word to those who are unaware of the festival and to support local organisations.

Appendix 1 Comments 2018

General:

- Wonderful range of events. Please continue with the Festival next year - and I hope I can take part in many more events in 2019
- The HAF is excellent, I hope to do more in the future
- Great event each year
- Please keep sending the mag so I can go to events in the future - on the computer!
- Enjoyed seeing round local landmarks
- Very good and interesting. Thank you!
- Will return next year for more events
- Very historical and enjoyable
- Excellent
- Very interesting, as ever
- A brilliant combination, extraordinary depth and vision
- Very good and informative
- Big thank you to all the organisers. Much appreciated
- Enjoyed the day very much. Good addition to HAF
- HAF is excellent
- I have only attended 2017 and 2018 but have found them to be varied and interesting. Very useful in keeping up to date
- The whole is a very important and inspiring, exemplifying the dynamism of archaeology in the highlands
- Super
- Fantastic and informative - thoroughly enjoyable and look forward to next year
- Try and attract a greater number of younger people
- Excellent as usual
- All very good
- You should have a facebook page for HAF
- Very interesting and educational. Really enjoyed it
- Excellent informative visit. Work is much appreciated - extraordinary hard work
- Splendid work
- Good idea, but a cold time of year
- Could be linked more to OPEN Doors. I was away from Inverness most of the period, otherwise I would have attended more events. Very good local exercise.
- More event on Skye, especially on north end
- More Skye events
- I should get more involved in future
- Rare combination of walks, events and talks. Well organized, mind blowing access to sites and stimulating talks. Regardless of wind and weather I found every visit was an education, and provided much thought
- Lots of different interesting events, thank you
- It's brilliant, look forward to it every year, only complaint is that it's impossible to attend all the events I want to. For example: Saturday 6th Oct I wanted to go to SIX events! Please try to spread it out
- The festival is going from strength to strength. It is quite varied and widespread. Long may it continue!
- Well organised event and good exhibition

- Thoroughly enjoyed it. Thank you
- Great festival – varied interests, knowledge base etc etc. Well done all

Website

- Appreciate the help and coordination with sites, location etc
- Easy to use - clear
- Will use in future
- Website useful but no substitute for the printed booklet
- Interactive online form would be better than a download and email version. But this is minor
- Difficuly (and irritating on a slow connection) to find events near to my location
- Very good and helpful
- make booking form for conference non "read only". Difficult to fill in and send back unless you are good at PC. How about an online form to fill in?
- Easy to use
- Very good
- Easy to use
- Would like to see distance included in description of walks
- Informative
- Easy to navigate
- Well presented, booklet was also essential in its detail
- Amazing amount of options

Conference

- A wide range of speakers and research periods discussed
- A well-informed and expressed lecture by someone having difficulty with the technology (<CAN'T READ>) is a thousand times better than a similar one given with what seemed like a lack of enthusiasm on Sat 13th Oct. Admittedly not the most exciting data
- Non-dairy milk for coffee please? Organisationally, other than that, it's perfect
- One presentation about North Kessock should not have been commissioned. Poor presentation, little interest. The rest of the conference talks were very interesting. Nice sandwich lunch too
- Always a wonderful conference. Wouldn't miss it for the world. Thanks to the organisers
- Some great talks. Shame there wasn't time for greater discussion on the Saturday. The North Kessock talk was unfortunate
- Council Buildings are an excellent site. Free parking pretty essential. I brought a friend to Richard Bradley's lecture and to the one on 29Sept and she enjoyed them as well
- I only attended the conference, which was excellent. I am not local.
- The lack of ventilation in the council chamber really needs addressing. By the afternoon on Saturday the air was hot and very stuffy. This is not the first year this has been a problem
- Excellent conference - topics were very interesting. This conference I think will only get more popular and perhaps oversubscribed - should we plan for bigger venue or more days for the future? Really useful to get contact names as expect for our own project. Nice to see vast amount of local projects.
- Well managed, excellent. Would like to know localised digs: can arrange participants via H4H/ R2Recovery/ BGH DIO. Would be good if speakers could hang fire rather than depart after talks for questions in breaks
- It was very interesting, lots of good speakers

- Thank you for incorporating last years comments into programme. Longer lunch time around poster session so we can eat and not miss anything, free time to see other stands/stalls. Wonderful contend on Saturday - enjoyed every minute. Missed opening/comments but didn't realise Jim Bone had passed away this summer. Some line of ackknnowledgement of his contribution to highland archaeology would be great. If mentioned, and I missed, please accept my apologies. Only other comment: Gluten free biscuits and non dairy milk options at tea/coffee breaks would be welcome. Thank you for decaf coffee and herbal teas! Wonderful conference - Thank you so much. Top quality event! And Richard Bradly - kudos. He is a legend!
- The conference was brilliant - I have attended for over 10 years and this was the best ever! Congratulations to everyone involved
- What happens if the conference continues to attract increasing numbers. You need a plan!
- This was my first archaeology conference as I'm just starting out. I had a brilliant time! I have learned lots and felt very welcome. Will hopefully be back next year! Planning on studying archaeology at uni, in the next few years
- An amazing event
- Interesting talks. Good mixture of subjects and periods (conference)
- Whole festival as good as usual. Council Buildings: What has happended to the coffee machine? It was there last year and have very good, hot coffee. Much Missed
- Best conference yet. Richard Bradley's talk excellent
- This was, as ever, an excellent event, and an excellent presentation of the current archaeological research in Highlands. Well done!
- Please can you change the conference weekend? I would love to attend just 1 or 2 talks, due to ill health cannot commit to 2 full days! How about a pay per talk ticket system?
- The festival is something I look forward to every year - think I've only missed one or two. This year's was particularly interesting and enjoyable! If only some of the quieter speakers could be encouraged to project rather than use their "one to one" delivery, particularly when turning away from the mic to look at the screen. Otherwise you are doing a great job overall.

Specific Events

- E24 (Dalmore Wartime Remains)- The reason for only a "3" for Dalmore is that the distillery cordoned off areas that were supposed to be looked at
- E11 ((Tomatin ROC Post)- Good to go back down!
- E74 (A walk along Strathpeffer Railway Line) - The walk was well presented
- E49 (Stars and Folklore around the Fire) – Great Night, Well organised
- E49 (ditto) – Really enjoyable, good knowledge and not too cloudy, yay!
- E49 (ditto) – This event was great, hopefully to be repeated next year. Thank you!

Selected comments from Geocache visits posted on www.geocaching.com during HAF.

- Woop! FTF Nice easy find. Lovely leaflets enclosed. We weren't sure if you wanted tradables but just to conform with etiquette we left a wee sticky in place of our badge. This is a great museum if you get the chance do visit. Friendly and informative. TFTC. [Glencoe Museum]
- Found this at 10.10am today having travelled south especially to look for it. What a lovely area and ideal for children. Thought the FTF would be gone but was pleasantly surprised to see it was still waiting a signature. Came with Koselig and geopup who was fine until she encountered the wooden deer. Lots of barking ensued! Thanks for placing a cache here in such a great place. Dropped TB Fav Point TFTC. [Ferrycroft Visitor Centre]

- Well, we made real hard work of this FTF but we got there in the end and then enjoyed visit inside the centre.
Left TB. TFTC [Applecross Heritage Centre]
- Our 6th day driving the North Coast 500 and after an overnight stay in Laide this was our first port of call. Interesting little museum that is due to move to bigger premises soon. Please have a favourite point and TFTC. [Gairloch Museum]
- Found this (straight forward) cache on a visit to this excellent museum. Our first find in the Highlands whilst on holiday far from home. TFTC [Highland Folk Museum]
- Great place for local history [Highland Museum of Childhood]
- This is a super cache and today we found it in wild and wet conditions. All was in good order and we took a brochure and travel bug. Many thanks for placing the cache in this lovely spot- we really appreciate it 🐾🐕 [Armadale Castle]
- This weekend was a long planned geocache weekend with Straat-Egisch, Andre61 and Iluvatar0. We go geocaching every half year for a few years now and until now we visited the north-east of France to discover all the bunkers in the Maginotlinie. As we ran out of bunkers we looked for something different. Schotland is a beautiful country with it's castles and nature. So we put a challenging plan together for a great trip. And it was a great trip. HAFcaches thanks for this cache!

