

## Brief for the role of Website Technical Partner in the creation of a new platform for the ScottishShale website.

The ScottishShale.co.uk website was established by the museum in 2010, and has been continually developed, extended, and remodelled by the museum team. The website delivers a museum service through providing access to collections, archives and other resources, which are interlinked by indices, articles, and other products of research to create a network of knowledge.

A grant from Museum Galleries Scotland's Recognition Fund will support two activities:

1. the creation of a new digital platform for the website
2. the transfer of existing content to the new platform and the addition of new content

It is anticipated that the first activity will be carried out by the technical partner appointed to the project while the second will be carried out within the museum through creation of a fixed-term post. We remain open to proposals on how best to structure this process, and for the detailed definition of the respective roles of technical partner and museum.

Major considerations in this process are that:

- the new platform is as future-proofed as practical, minimising obstacles to a continuing evolution as web standards develop or requirements change. This is likely to be reflected in the adoption of common standards and open-source software.
- the museum retains ownership of the website and all resources associated with it. A long-term working relationship with the technical partner seems likely to arise from the project, however the museum would wish to retain choice of technical partner, which needs to be reflected in arrangements for hosting, intellectual property and other practical ownership issues.
- the project equips museum staff with experience, technical skills, and an extended capacity to maintain and develop the website and related digital content. Design of the project will allow for such training and sharing of knowledge.
- The technical partner and the museum work closely together in devising the layout, appearance and functionality of the website.

### General design considerations

- A responsive design, adapting appropriately for use on desktop, tablet or phone.
- Simple navigation from home page to functions relevant to the likely interests of users
- A limited range of standard page formats, most integrating dynamic content with expandable content sections.
- Digital assets identified by standard forms of description, classification, and tags
- Powerful multi-factor search functions, restricted to certain topics, or searching full site.
- Map interface incorporating historic map and bespoke layers.
- Archive map and plan viewer linked to mapping application
- Image browser, selecting images by multiple search factors
- Efficient method for delivering, searching and characterising the content of large compound text/image files as PDF or alternative file forms.

- Topical content on home page and links with social media
- Staff log-in from footer with tools for collaboration and recording changes

## Preliminary detailed description.

(see <http://www.scottishshale.co.uk/workingresources/NS/home.html>)

The top level menu (headings: Collections, People, Gazetteer, Articles, West Lothian, Images, Maps) would be present at the top of all pages, displayed as a hamburger on smaller formats. The header might also contain a full site search box. If practical, breadcrumbs and “previous page” links would also be incorporated. The footer would carry links to standard information pages. The home page would feature tiles linking to each of the seven menu items, plus topical content that would regularly change.

The Collections index page would feature a search function that would enable boolean or other compound searches of the full collection or specific areas of it. If practical in a responsive site, the list of results would continue current practice of displaying a thumbnail image and brief description and might additionally indicate to which area of collection each belonged. Individual results would feature a page-wide image and description, and where appropriate offer links to pdf or other specialist files. Subsidiary pages hyperlinked from the index page offer opportunity to browse records by classification or by tag, or view a comprehensive list of each area of the collection

The People index page would feature a search function based on forename, surname, and perhaps other factors. The search would cover all records, or be restricted to employment records or other sub-sets. Results may also be browsed by letter matrix of the surname. Detailed result pages would include, as appropriate, images of the full page of the original record, and perhaps link to a pdf file of the full document. Consideration will be given as to how best to automatically incorporate the occurrence of personal names in other forms of record (eg newspaper cuttings, biographical notes) within the realm of the search, and whether there remains value in manually matching multiple records relating to the same individual. A list of records selected by occupation might be incorporated into the appropriate page of an “occupations” encyclopedia. This and other family history resources would be hyperlinked from the people index page.

The Gazetteer index page would be composed of panels linking to the various gazetteer/encyclopedia sections. Such gazetteer/encyclopedia sections aim to provide a comprehensive list of its subject (eg oil works sites, oil companies, etc.) each linked to a page. Sections generally comprise of 20 to 200 pages, although the menu may be longer to accommodate alternative names. In responsive pages, a letter matrix, expandable sections, or alternative device, would be required to provide a manageable menu. Each gazetteer page would follow a standard format with expandable sub-headings and incorporate various dynamically linked resources. Each relevant gazetteer page will include a dynamic map window indicating location of the site. Change to a site with time, represented by successive map surveys, might best be achieved by stacking map images stored locally, and changing transparency of layers. A similar arrangement might be employed for fading between now-and-then images in other parts of the website.

The Article index page enables browsing of articles by topic, either by drop-down or expandable sub-menu, or by linking to sub-pages of index. “Article” pages generally offer a discussion, an introduction, or index to a topic in circumstances where a gazetteer/encyclopedia approach would not be appropriate. An article page might be linked from many other parts of the site to elaborate, offer context, or otherwise provide explanation of a topic. As in a blog, standard tags would be associated with each article page, and consideration might be given to how article topics might be browsed by tag.

The [West Lothian](#) index page offers direct access to the resources likely to be the principal interest of those exploring local histories. These include a map-based access to images and other resources, access to a digital library of local history publications, and a categorised list of articles employing an expanding menu.

The [Images](#) index page presents an array of expandable thumbnails with facility to browse through these. Thumbnails are selected by a compound search by category or tag.

The [Maps](#) index page, offers a choice of initial viewpoints on a dynamic map, perhaps starting with a world view. The NLS Historic Maps API would be integrated for areas of the UK. In most parts, the map will feature simple clickable pins representing oil industry sites, and displaying relevant information or linking to appropriate pages. Mapping information will be more complex within West Lothian, where the museum will create additional layers defining parish and estate boundaries, which will relate to tags or classification of digital assets. Other layers may illustrate two dimensional areas such as the extent of mine workings or linear features such as railways. Pin markers would ideally scale effectively with the level of zoom, recognising the likely concentration of markers in urban areas. Markers should also be able to indicate the direction of view in order to show orientation of archive images. Consideration might be given to integration of certain features with Google streetview.

The [Topical Content](#) section of the home page might feature latest blogs, which would be classified and archived in a conventional way. It might also be used to feature new or updated article pages, or perhaps integrate with social media.

The site would incorporate Google analytics and be appropriately optimised for search engine visibility

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Costed proposals are welcome from appropriately experienced web developers. Responses are likely to include information on the experience of the practice, and of key individuals who would be involved in the work, offering appropriate evidence of competency and capacity. Suggestions would be welcomed on how the work might be approached, how an effective working partnership might be maintained with the museum, and how technical knowledge and insight might be transferred to the museum team, including those involved in transfer of content.

Study of the existing [www.scottishshale.co.uk](http://www.scottishshale.co.uk) will provide a clear impression of the scope and scale of the work, the achievements to date, and the limitations of the current platform.

Proposal should be submitted on or before Monday 21<sup>st</sup> August to:

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