



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **New strategy for Scotland's local civic and heritage groups announced**

The Scottish Civic Trust, the national voice for local civic and heritage groups, has today (3 February 2025) launched their new strategy *Scotland's Places, People, and their Stories*.

Promoting access, improving wellbeing, supporting communities and facilitating learning and skills development are at the core of the new five-year strategy. It highlights the potential of inclusive places and stories to deliver benefits for communities across the country.

*Scotland's Places, People, and their Stories* was created following a national consultation with community groups, as well as a research and policy review. The Scottish Civic Trust also sought out public input via social media on key issues such as the climate emergency, sense of belonging and feelings of safety and representation.

The strategy, which builds on the previous strategy '*Celebrate, Take Action, Advocate*,' sets out how the Trust will support Scotland's grassroots community and civic groups through campaigning for liveable neighbourhoods, managing a community heritage knowledge hub, hosting regional civic society networks, offering construction sector taster sessions and supporting traditional building skills apprentices.

Key activities that the Trust will continue and expand as part of the strategy include the national Doors Open Days festival, Diverse Heritage project and My Place programme. Doors Open Days is Scotland's largest free heritage festival which welcomes more 160,000 people per year. The Diverse Heritage programme works with marginalised people to facilitate integration and belonging. My Place is a three-part programme which includes awards that celebrate community-led placemaking; a built environment photography competition that encourages young people to develop a sense of community; and photography skills workshops that foster community networks with young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.

**Joe Traynor, Director of The Scottish Civic Trust, said:** "*Scotland's local civic and heritage groups are integral to caring for, developing and celebrating our shared spaces and stories. In turn, our places and stories combine to form the rich national heritage and identity of Scotland. We neglect our local historic and built environment at our peril.*"

**Angela Bonney, New Chair of Scottish Civic Trust, said:** "*I am pleased to help lead the Trust in new and exciting directions. Our membership of 150 grassroots organisations are at the heart of the strategy, and we aim to empower them to care for and celebrate their built and cultural heritage. We look forward to working with them to deliver positive outcomes for Scotland's communities.*"

For more information about *Scotland's Places, People, and their Stories*, visit:

<https://scottishcivictrust.org.uk/trust/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Scotlands-Places-People-and-their-Stories-A5.pdf>.

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**Notes for editors:**

## **About The Scottish Civic Trust**

The Scottish Civic Trust is the national organisation for local civic community and heritage groups. The Scottish Civic Trust works in partnership with all communities to preserve the uniqueness of their place and promote access to the historic environment and its stories to ensure its relevance in contemporary Scotland.

Founded in 1967 to help people connect to their built heritage and countryside, preserve the uniqueness of their locality and appreciate how this connects to the wider unique character of Scotland, we successfully campaigned for the restoration of Edinburgh's New Town and can also claim credit for saving New Lanark and bringing Doors Open Days to the United Kingdom.

Today, the Scottish Civic Trust continues to advocate for Scotland's places and stories. The Trust coordinates the national Doors Open Days festival, the largest free heritage festival in Scotland, and supports community-led placemaking through the My Place Awards, My Place Photography Competition and My Place Workshops. The Trust's Diverse Heritage programme co-creates heritage events and activities, as well as offers bespoke inclusion training to heritage organisations. The Trust also works with planning authorities to preserve listed buildings and conservation areas and connects local civic and heritage groups with advice and support.

## **Further Information**

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