Doors Open Days Goes Digital!

Thursday 4 June, 2020

DOORS OPEN DAYS GOES DIGITAL!

Doors Open Days is going digital this year! Scotland's biggest free festival of architecture will present its largest ever digital offering this September, as we celebrate Scotland's buildings and stories online, through tours, lectures, DIY learning events and more. We're responding to current concerns surrounding COVID-19 by making Doors Open Days 2020 more digital so that people across Scotland and the world can continue to safely explore Scotland's buildings, spaces and places. A limited number of venues will still be open for physical visits this year, but we expect most people will enjoy new and cherished Scottish sites from the comfort of their armchair!

All across Scotland, we're harnessing the good will and spirit of adventure of local organisations to create unique content that will inspire, educate and amuse anyone with an interest in buildings. Last year virtual visitors could scale the heights of Paisley Abbey and our Young Advisory Panel staged Instagram takeovers – what digital discoveries will you make this year? We're asking venues and groups to produce a wide range of online offerings, such as Facebook and Instagram Live guided tours, recorded oral histories, webinars, 360-degree tours, virtual exhibitions, question and answer sessions and more. If you're interested in joining in, we have compiled some great resources and ideas for venues and organisations interested in taking part that will help you take the first steps.

We'll be hosting everything through the Doors Open Days website, from where you'll be able to explore nooks and crannies in venues large and small across Scotland this September. The Scottish Civic Trust will also be creating a weekly zine highlighting all of the exciting digital events and tours on a region-by-region basis, which will be sent out through Doors Open Days' social media channels and e-bulletin.

Ticket booking systems only for physical access to venues

We only encourage people to access buildings where the venue operators are confident it's safe to do so. The small number of events and buildings that will be open for physical visits will use a ticketing system to monitor and ensure safe access according to the most current social distancing guidelines. Numbers of visitors will be limited and monitored in line with the latest government recommendations appropriate to the Phase of lockdown in Scotland and the requirements of their and our insurers.

Director of the Scottish Civic Trust, Dr Susan O'Connor, said:

We're delighted to encourage our venues to become more digital this year through Doors Open Days - it's the best way to reach a broader range of people with Scotland's unique heritage, both at home and across the world. In particular, we're looking forward to helping our beautiful buildings and places become more accessible to those who wouldn't normally be able to take part in Doors Open Days for physical or cultural reasons. Making the built environment easier for everyone to enjoy is a core part of what we do.

Chair of Scottish Civic Trust, Colin McLean, said:

We at Scottish Civic Trust are excited to support the new direction for this year's Doors Open Days as a digital festival. By taking the festival online we are not only keeping our venues and communities safe, but offering support to organisations across Scotland to develop their digital literacy. We hope that our support will give venues confidence to have a continued online presence, and that digital engagement will become a mainstay of heritage outreach in the years to come.

Chief Executive of Historic Environment Scotland, Alex Paterson, said:

Providing a strong digital platform for this year's Doors Open Day activities is a great way of ensuring people can enjoy different aspects of Scotland's rich historic architectural heritage.

Since the onset of Covid-19, we have all had to adapt to new ways of doing things, with technology playing a key role in helping achieve that, and again, here we see another great example of that in action

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with this year's event.

I would like to applaud the team at Doors Open Days on their creative thinking here and we at HES are proud to again be part of this fantastic annual celebration of our heritage.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

For more information, images and interview requests please contact Erin Burke on Erin.Burke@scottishcivictrust.org.uk.

Guidance on how venues can participate digitally in Doors Open Days 2020 can be found on the Doors Open Days website here: https://www.doorsopendays.org.uk/hosting/digital-guidance-2020/

About Scottish Civic Trust

Scottish Civic Trust's mission is to celebrate Scotland's built environment, take action for its improvement and empower its communities. The vision which drives this is thriving, beautiful and well cared for buildings and places, which help to support and sustain a high quality of life. More information can be found at scottishcivictrust.org.uk.

Founded in 1967, Scottish Civic Trust exists to help people connect with their built heritage and take a leading role in guiding its development. In its infancy, it successfully campaigned for the restoration of Edinburgh's New Town and can also claim credit for saving New Lanark – both now part of Scotland's network of six World Heritage Sites.

In addition to these major milestones, Scottish Civic Trust was also the first to bring Doors Open Day to the UK – the largest free festival of architecture – which celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2019.

About Doors Open Days

Doors Open Days is Scotland's largest free festival that celebrates heritage and the built environment, new and old. Every September you can explore hundreds of fascinating buildings across Scotland for free. Some open up once a year, some just once in a lifetime. For more information: www.doorsopendays.org.uk

The purpose of Doors Open Days is to enable everyone to enjoy our shared built and cultural heritage by accessing places, spaces and activities not usually open to them, and this year you can do this through tours or talks or live sessions hosted through the Doors Open Days website.

Doors Open Days is supported by Historic Environment Scotland, and is part of European Heritage Days. For more information about European Heritage Days: https://www.europeanheritagedays.com/Home.aspx

About Historic Environment Scotland

Historic Environment Scotland is the lead public body established to investigate, care for and promote Scotland's historic environment. They are responsible for more than 300 properties of national importance, which combined draw millions over visitors each year. Their conservation experts provide guidance, training and technical research into Scotland's built environment. Through their outreach programme, Historic Environment Scotland promotes community and individual learning engagement with Scotland's heritage. They contribute to the Scottish Government's strategy to tackle climate change and reduce Scotland's carbon footprint. For more information: www.historicenvironment.scot/

For further information

For further information, images and interviews please contact Erin Burke, Communications and Events Officer, Scottish Civic Trust at Erin.Burke@scottishcivictrust.org.uk.

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#DigiDoorsOpen

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