Scotland's largest free festival of places, history and culture to return in September

Thursday 8 July, 2021

Doors Open Days will return in September with a programme of in-person and online events and activities.

2021 marks the 32nd year of Doors Open Days, a festival that sees organisations and volunteers offer free access to sites and events across Scotland. The festival aims to ensure that Scotland's built and cultural heritage is made accessible to everyone living in and visiting the country.

Inspired by the successes of Doors Open Days' first ever digital festival in 2020, which welcomed 184,000 virtual visitors from across the world, the 2021 festival will have both online and in-person events and activities. The combination of in-person and online events will enable more visitors than ever before to explore Scotland's places.

A virtual visitor to Doors Open Days 2020 said: "I hope that digital talks and tours will continue to form part of the programme! The digital events have removed two barriers I usually face to participation - difficulty getting on to talks/tours due to limited numbers and difficulty attending evening sessions due to caring responsibilities."

Doors Open Days is coordinated nationally by the Scottish Civic Trust, and is part of European Heritage Days. Local coordinators from civic trusts, heritage organisations and local authorities create and manage programmes in each region.

Director of Scottish Civic Trust, Doors Open Days national coordinator, Dr Susan O'Connor, said: "Hundreds of venues across the country are busy behind-the-scenes organising events, planning walking tours and creating videos and other virtual activities for visitors. We're particularly excited to welcome visitors back into buildings for in-person events so we can all meet face-to-face with our neighbours and local places once again."

Audiences can sign up to the Doors Open Days e-newsletter (bit.ly/DODenewsletter) to be the first to know when the festival programme is announced in August.

COVID-19 restrictions

Doors Open Days only encourages people to attend in-person events in accordance with the latest Scottish Government COVID-19 guidance. The events and buildings that will be open for physical visits in September will ensure safe access according to the most current guidelines.

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Notes for editors:

For interview and image requests, please contact Erin.Burke@scottishcivictrust.org.uk.

About Doors Open Days

Doors Open Days is Scotland's largest free festival that celebrates Scotland's places, history and culture, new and old. Each September, the festival offers access to over a thousand sites and events across Scotland. The aim of Doors Open Days is to ensure that Scotland's built and cultural heritage is made accessible to people living in and visiting the country. Doors Open Days is supported by Historic Environment Scotland, and is part of European Heritage Days. For more information about Doors Open Days: www.doorsopendays.org.uk.

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. Founded in 1967, the Civic Trust supports people to connect with their built heritage and take a leading role in guiding its development. In its infancy, it successfully

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campaigned for the restoration of Edinburgh's New Town and was instrumental in the revitalisation of 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, which celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2019. For more information about the Scottish Civic Trust: www.scottishcivictrust.org.uk.

About European Heritage Days

Celebrated in the 50 signatory States to the European Cultural Convention, the European Heritage Days highlight the diversity of local skills, traditions, architectural styles and works of art that constitute shared European heritage. Launched by the Council of Europe in 1985 in France, the Days have been organised as a joint initiative of the European Commission and the Council of Europe since 1999. Enabling citizens to explore a wide range of cultural assets through a number of themed events, European Heritage Days help uncover histories of people and places that have contributed to shape the culture and heritage of Europe. 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

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