

PERTH CIVIC TRUST

Perth Civic Trust Forward Plan for 2025

Introduction

This is the third Forward Plan of Perth Civic Trust and builds upon previous years plans. During the last three years the Civic Trust has established a pattern of public meetings and events that have helped raise awareness of the built and civic heritage of Perth. This plan outlines our thoughts, ideas and proposals for 2025.

Events

The following public meetings are planned for this year:

1st May - AGM and talk on the development of railways in Perth by Neale Elder.

5th June - talk on the Development of churches in Perth by Allan Condie

Date to be confirmed - Talk on St John's Kirk.

Late summer - Photographic evening at Willows Café. TBC.

Autumn - Possible talk on A&A Heiton's architecture in Perth. TBC.

Partnership working

We intend to continue developing partnership working with the following local organisations:

Perth & Kinross Council
Culture PK
Perth & Kinross Heritage Trust
Perthshire Society of Natural Sciences
Royal Scottish Geographical Society
Glover's Incorporation
Guildry Incorporation
Friends of P&K Archive
Thomson Charitable Trust

Projects

Blue plaque scheme. Listed Building applications have been submitted for two locations, 62 Princes Street for Magnus Jackson and two at 3 Watergate for David Octavius Hill and his photographic assistant, Jessie Mann who was born in Watergate and can lay claim to be Scotland's first female photographer.

It is intended to proceed with further applications by continuing to engage with PKC Planning to ensure that this project has a smooth passage.

Historic Map and Atlas

In conjunction with Perthshire Society of Natural Sciences and the Historic Towns Trust, the Historic Map of Perthshire was launched in May 2024 to much fanfare. The Map has been well received and sales have been good. Phase 2 is the development of an Atlas, utilising much of the

information that could not be accommodated on the Map, and expanding the overall understanding of how the city and area developed. This phase is now underway.

Website

Our website has been updated to make it easier to navigate and this will be an ongoing process going forward. All the existing plaques in Perth and Scone have been recorded and can now be viewed from anywhere in the world. All the information the Trust generates along with visual presentations and notes from talks can be accessed along with links to content from other partner providers, the Scottish Civic Trust, for instance. Regular newsletters are sent to members, informing them of our latest plans, seeking their feedback, and giving them priority booking for Perth Civic Trust events at reduced prices. Thereafter we publicise our activities on our website and our social media page on Facebook.

Annual Report

Perth Civic Trust, along with all other Scottish charities, are required to submit an annual report to the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator O.S.C.R. noting activities undertaken, future intentions and annual accounts to demonstrate compliance with the term of our Constitution. Our Report for 2023-24 was submitted by the due date, in December 2024.

Guided Walks

A very successful walk, led by Felicity Graham was held in September 2024. This took in a number of sites on a route from St Leonard's in the field to the Royal George Hotel, taking in a number of sites on route while explaining their history and significance. The walk attracted a maximum attendance with an equal mix of members and visitors and was much appreciated. Plans for future walks are in preparation.

Planning

We will continue to monitor Planning Applications for Perth, particularly in the Conservation Areas, responding to areas of concern when such applications arise. The majority of recent applications have been relatively minor, but the increasing number of Change of Use applications from houses/flats/offices to short-term let accommodation is of concern, particularly as we seem to have a shortage of housing for residents.

We will continue to participate in the Planning Users Forum, particularly in the run-up to LDP 3.

Membership and involvement of the public

We want to engage more with the public, partly through public meetings, lectures and guided walks. In addition, our website has been upgraded and should attract more attention and encourage membership. We continue to support St John's Kirk in its efforts to promote the building and we are pleased with the substantial increase in visitor numbers as the result of the new Perth Museum opening in the spring of 2024.

We continue to press the Council for improvements to areas of Perth which badly require rejuvenation. The demolition of the Clachan bar / Quality Cafe and Whitehorse Hotel sites has opened up opportunities for housing in the city centre.

We are encouraged by the creation of PKC's Vacant and Eyesore Buildings Taskforce, who are looking to engage with building owners and assisting them to bring vacant and at risk buildings and sites back into use and to improve the overall structure and appearance of buildings to improve the overall streetscape of the City. There are many areas in need of attention, so they have an unenviable task going forward.

The redevelopment of the former St Andrew's Church in Atholl Street is particularly welcome and the YMCA are to be commended for completing an excellent scheme, including the redevelopment of flats in North William Street to provide accommodation.

We are also engaged in looking at improvements of public spaces in the City centre. This includes areas such as Supermarket car parks and corner sites. Budget cut have made it difficult for the Council to maintain these and Beautiful Perth, a volunteer group, has been very positively instrumental in taking over the care and maintenance of a number of sites, including Tay Street and the areas immediately around the new Museum. We will look to engage with Beautiful Perth to explore any joint schemes that might be brought forward.

We have engaged with PKC over the changing Leisure proposals which have been brought forward between January and September 2024 and the various options which are now being developed, but which have been received with little public enthusiasm to date, and we will continue to monitor developments as proposals come forward.

We have also engaged with the various public "Consultations" issued by PKC, Secondary Schools in Perth, Bells Sports Centre and The Draft Perth City Development and Design Framework, although the options offered have, in some cases been limited.

Willie Wilson

28.02.2025