



Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust

DRAFT Strategic Plan 2026–2031

This plan is a work in progress. Visual aesthetics will be added at a later date.

Foreword by Chair (*placeholder*)

Heritage is not just about the past—it is a powerful force for shaping the future.

Across Perth and Kinross, our historic environment defines who we are, connects communities, supports the economy, and offers solutions to some of today's biggest challenges—from climate change to inclusive growth.

This strategy sets out how Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust will harness that potential. It is ambitious, collaborative and forward-looking—focused on unlocking the full value of heritage for people, place and future generations.

01. Who we are

About PKHT

Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust drives the care, conservation and celebration of the historic environment across Perth and Kinross—bringing together people, skills and investment to care for places and unlock their potential.

Since 1988, we have worked at the heart of communities to rescue buildings, provide expert advice, reveal hidden histories, and create opportunities. Whether restoring a tenement, supporting a community project, archaeological work and deepening understanding of our past, or training the next generation of craftspeople, our work delivers real and lasting change.

We are proud of our impact: actively safeguarding historic places, enabling repair and regeneration, creating opportunities through traditional building skills, and enriching lives through stronger connections to place, history and community.

We operate across urban and rural Perth and Kinross, combining **practical action, trusted expertise and strong partnerships** to ensure heritage plays a central role in a thriving, sustainable future.

We believe heritage is a powerful force for social, economic, environmental good—strengthening communities, inspiring pride in place, enhancing quality of life, supporting economic prosperity, and helping people and places flourish.

Vision

A Perth and Kinross where the historic environment is at the heart of a thriving, sustainable and inclusive future.

Mission

To lead and inspire action that protects, enhances and unlocks the full potential of our outstanding historic environment for people and communities.

Values

Collaborative • Innovative • Inclusive • Sustainable

About this strategy

This strategy sets out how we will **scale up our impact and ambition** over the next five years.

It brings together our full range of activity—from building conservation, to archaeology, community heritage and historic environment records to major investment programmes such as the Perth City Heritage Fund—into a single, clear framework.

It aligns with national priorities, including *Our Past, Our Future*, while responding to the specific opportunities and challenges of Perth and Kinross.

02. The current state of our shared heritage (alternative title: ‘Where we are now’?)

National context

Scotland’s historic environment is increasingly recognised as a driver of a wellbeing economy, supporting net zero, regeneration and community resilience.

But it faces growing pressures—from climate change and rising costs to skills shortages—requiring new thinking, innovation and collaboration.

Local context: Perth and Kinross

Perth and Kinross’s historic environment is a **defining asset**—shaping distinctive places, supporting economic vitality, and enriching everyday life. It attracts visitors, supports businesses, and enhances the quality and identity of our towns, landscapes and communities.

It also plays a **vital role** in social wellbeing, offering opportunities for learning, volunteering and participation, while strengthening pride and connection to place. At the same time, it contributes to climate action, with traditional buildings offering low-carbon solutions through repair, reuse and sustainable materials.

These strengths create powerful opportunities. By investing in heritage, we can support town centre regeneration, improve housing, create jobs, and build more resilient communities.

However, these opportunities sit alongside significant challenges.

Key challenges

- Widespread building condition issues and maintenance backlog
- Increasing risk of structural failure in historic fabric
- Climate impacts on vulnerable materials
- Shortage of traditional building skills
- Vacancy and changing economic patterns
- Capacity and funding pressures

Our track record

We have demonstrated what is possible:

- Enabled over **£10M investment** into heritage
- **90+ buildings repaired and brought back into use**
- Hundreds of people trained in traditional skills
- Thousands engaged through on-site archaeology and outreach

This provides a strong foundation—but the scale of need, and opportunity, inspires us to go further.

03. Our priorities (2026–31)

To unlock the full potential of heritage, we will deliver across **five interconnected priorities**:

1. Investing in historic buildings and places

Driving repair, reuse and regeneration.

2. Connecting people and communities with heritage

Expanding inclusive access, participation and impact.

3. Understanding and protecting our historic environment

Strengthening knowledge, evidence and planning.

4. Building skills and innovation

Creating a future-ready workforce and new approaches.

5. Tackling the climate emergency through heritage

Ensuring heritage is conserved as a key part of the solution to the climate emergency.

Together, these priorities ensure we deliver **practical outcomes, long-term resilience and meaningful public benefit**.

Priority One: Investing in historic buildings and places

Driving repair, reuse and regeneration.

We will lead a step-change in the repair and reuse of historic buildings—unlocking their potential to support regeneration, housing and economic growth.

What we will do

- Deliver the **Perth City Heritage Fund**, including:
 - Major Grants (comprehensive repair)
 - Small Grants (preventative repair)
 - Undertaking a City Condition Survey to focus our grants on the areas of greatest conservation need
 - Work with our partners to streamline our work, maximising its impact for communities
- Actively support the reuse of vacant and underused buildings
- Provide advice and support to empower owners and communities maintain their properties and create change
- Seek funding opportunities to offer wider grant programmes across Perth and Kinross

Outcomes

- 20+ buildings repaired and conserved for current and future generations to enjoy
- 5 vacant properties brought back into use
- Key historic areas are improved in appearance and condition
- Increased private investment and economic activity
- Stronger, more vibrant town centres and communities

Priority Two: Connecting people and communities with heritage

Expanding inclusive access, participation and impact.

We will ensure more people can **experience, understand and benefit from heritage**.

What we will do

- Develop a Living Heritage Hub model for meaningful engagement, heritage participation, wellbeing and barrier-breaking support for communities
- Deepen our engagement with communities, and build a clear understanding of their needs
- Seek funding and opportunities to expand the Community Heritage Grants Scheme
- Deliver community archaeology and heritage projects
- Actively engage more diverse and under-represented communities
- Deliver events, tours and CPD programmes
- Develop innovative interpretation (including a Plaques Trail)
- Deliver a strong digital and communications programme
- Seek new funding and impactful partnerships to expand this work

Outcomes

- Increased participation and diversity of engagement
- Greater understanding, appreciation and engagement with heritage
- Stronger community ownership and pride

Priority Three: Understanding, researching and protecting our historic environment

Strengthening knowledge, evidence and planning.

We will strengthen the evidence, advice and systems that underpin effective conservation.

What we will do

- Deliver high quality planning archaeology and development management advice
- Maintain and develop the Historic Environment Record
- Facilitate surveys and condition assessments
- Share knowledge through archaeological research, heritage research and partnerships
- Seek funding opportunities to undertake a major archaeological dig

Outcomes

- Better-informed planning and decision-making
- Improved protection of archaeological and historic assets
- Stronger evidence base for investment and action

Priority Four: Building skills and innovation

Creating a future-ready workforce and new approaches.

We will build on our strong legacy in traditional building skills by developing ambitious, inclusive and partnership-led approaches that respond to the scale of the challenge—while integrating skills development within wider heritage ambitions.

Our ambition

To make Perth and Kinross a place where traditional skills are valued, accessible and future-focused—and where innovation, heritage learning and collaboration drive new solutions to long-standing challenges.

As part of this, we will explore and develop the Living Heritage Hub concept as an integrating focus for heritage learning, skills activity, community participation and partnership working—creating new opportunities for traditional skills development alongside wider heritage engagement.

What we will do

- Develop the Living Heritage Hub concept and associated skills opportunities
- Deliver an expanded Traditional Building Skills Roadshow programme for local schools
- Expand ‘Skills Focus’ courses and work placements
- Undertake a Traditional Building Skills audit to better understand skill gaps and support needs unique to Perth and Kinross
- Link training directly to live conservation projects
- Work with partners to reach under-served groups
- Deliver CPD, masterclasses and professional training
- Seek funding opportunities to develop a long-term major initiative in traditional building skills

Outcomes

- Increased skills participation and progression

- Over 500 young people engaged in traditional building skills
- More opportunities for the young workforce
- More diverse and inclusive workforce
- Stronger, more resilient skills pipeline
- Clear long-term plan for progressing our impact in Traditional Building Skills

Priority Five: Tackling the climate emergency through heritage

Ensuring heritage is conserved as a key part of the solution to the climate emergency.

We will unlock heritage's potential as a **key part of the climate solution**, demonstrating how traditional buildings can support a low-carbon future.

What we will do

- Deliver a **Perth Stone Audit** and integrate **Climate Impact Assessments** into our grants work
- Produce a new Net Zero Action Plan
- Promote and empower communities to use low-carbon lifecycle traditional materials and methods
- Support climate-resilient repair and retrofit
- Monitor and report the climate impact of our planning advisory service
- Embed sustainability into our projects and communications

Outcomes

- Increased awareness of heritage's role in climate action
- Improved resilience of historic buildings
- Reduced carbon footprint through repair and reuse
- Climate goals mainstreamed in organisational policy and project work

04.How we will deliver

Partnership

We will work with:

- Communities and volunteers
- Historic Environment Scotland
- The Gannochy Trust
- Perth and Kinross Council
- Education and sectoral partners

and many more.

Investment

We will:

- Deliver major grant programmes
- Leverage private and public investment
- Explore new opportunities to secure funding to expand our impact

Innovation

We will:

- Pilot new approaches and test new ideas
- Share learning nationally
- Position Perth and Kinross as a centre of excellence in heritage conservation

05. Our commitment

Heritage is not a constraint—it is an opportunity.

An opportunity to repair and renew our buildings. To create skilled jobs and support local economies. To strengthen communities and improve wellbeing. To enrich and deepen our relationship with our shared past. To respond to the climate emergency with knowledge and craft.

And to inspire people—to see their places differently, and to shape their future with confidence.

This strategy is our commitment to that vision.

Together, with our communities, partners and funders, we will ensure that Perth and Kinross's historic environment is not only protected, but **alive with possibility—and central to a better future for all.**

We will:

- Deliver measurable impact aligned to national priorities and local issues
- Meet and exceed funder expectations
- Champion fairness, inclusion and opportunity
- Act as a trusted, ambitious and forward-thinking partner
- Seek the funding and resources required to deliver our ambitious plans