



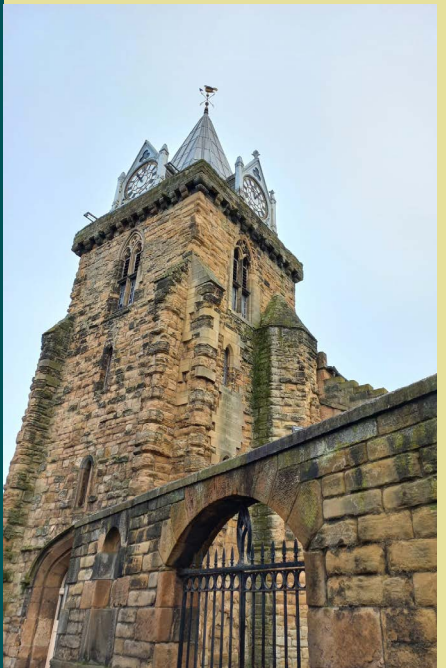
Heritage  
Trust  
Network

## Inverkeithing Town House, Fife Historic Buildings Trust

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The Trust's mission is to create viable futures for at risk heritage buildings and their communities by inspiring and enabling visionary conservation projects across Fife. It manages projects to conserve historic buildings at risk, ensuring that they have a renewed practical purpose, long term caring owners, and a viable future. It also fosters conservation practices and skills, as well as helping communities to appreciate their local heritage.







# INVERKEITHING HERITAGE REGENERATION SCHEME

Inverkeithing, in Fife, is a historic harbour town. It has a variety of listed buildings including a collection of five Category A-listed buildings in a small conservation area. As part of Fife Council's Inverkeithing Heritage Regeneration (IHR) scheme, Fife Historic Buildings Trust (FHBT) has been repairing and making accessible the Town House, to be a community space that meets the town's needs.

## THE IHR SCHEME

With a core focus on restoring and preserving significant landmarks, the IHR scheme, delivered in partnership by Fife Council and FHBT, has been engaging the local community through a variety of projects. These aim to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation for Inverkeithing's heritage. Activities include a Burgh Survey, including two standing building surveys, an archaeological excavation, training in traditional skills, and educational heritage activities aimed at raising awareness of Inverkeithing's rich heritage. Building repair grants have also been offered to privately owned properties, promoting traditional repairs across the town.

Throughout the five-year scheme spanning from 2019 to 2024, Inverkeithing's heritage will receive an investment exceeding £3.6 million. The scheme has gratefully received funding from a variety of sources including: Fife Council, National Lottery Heritage Fund (Townscape Heritage programme), Historic Environment Scotland (Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme), the Scottish and UK Governments and Crown Estates Coastal Communities funding.

## THE TOWN HOUSE

Just one of Inverkeithing's impressive listed buildings, the current Town House structure has a date stone of 1770, but it is likely that a building of some sort occupied this site from the date of Inverkeithing receiving its Royal Burgh status around

1160. The Town House served as the meeting place for the Burgh Council and represented the civic authority in the town.

## THE PROJECT

The building has undergone conservation and renovation work and will now function as an accessible and inclusive community hub that can host a range of events and activities.

Engaging the community with the project from the start has been crucial to its success. Local people made the decisions on the future use of the space, with a steering group working with the architect and Community Enterprise to make design choices. Clyde Archaeology and Northlight Heritage delivered training to members of the local community to give them the skills to survey the building. Volunteers from Inverkeithing Local History Society transcribed documents from their archive, relating to the repairs in the 1750s to the building.

The Inverkeithing Stitching in Time textile project again engaged the community with their town's heritage. Different community members took part in embroidery workshops and collaborated on producing a three-panel artwork that tells the history of the town. Primary School children were also connected with the project through activities such as heritage craft days and a walking tour of the town.

## CHALLENGES

Whilst the project has clearly already achieved a lot, it has not come without its challenges. Communicating with members of the community proved difficult

at times, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown periods, but this was overcome by moving meetings online. Another issue that can arise in community-based projects is that a small group of the same individuals continually engage and the wider community may not be reached. By having a wide range of activities for different, distinct audiences, the project has been able to reach a broad cross-section of the community.

## OPPORTUNITIES

The building will be managed by the newly formed Inverkeithing Old Town House SCIO, while Fife Council will retain ownership. Individuals with a passion for community, skills in finance and management from the local area, formed the charity to safeguard the future of the building and operate it on a day-to-day basis.

Overall, the Inverkeithing Town House project lays the groundwork for lasting positive change, aiming not just to preserve heritage but to create a community-run hub that reflects the town's identity and meets local needs.

For more information, visit: [fifehistoricbuildings.org.uk](http://fifehistoricbuildings.org.uk)

*Photographs from top left: the twin gables of Inverkeithing's A listed Friary hospitium; the Category A listed Town House during the capital works; the back of the Town House with cemetery in the foreground; the 14th century church tower; and Thomson's Lodging, one of five Category A-listed buildings in the conservation area.*

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