

# Doors Open Days

*get into buildings!*

Organiser Handbook



Message from the Scottish Civic Trust,  
National coordinating body for Doors Open Days

Firstly, thank you for agreeing to take part in Doors Open Days (DOD). The contribution that is made every year by communities throughout Scotland is simply amazing, and without the enormous good-will, enthusiasm and commitment of many thousands of volunteers and staff the event wouldn't happen.

Taking part in DODs can be enormously rewarding, brings great benefits and can also be fun. But, to make the most of the event, you will need to think about a number of issues. This Doors Open Days Organisers Handbook aims to highlight what these might be and suggest ways of tackling them so that both you and the public enjoy an enlightening, fun and safe day or event.

Sections 1 to 4 are essential reading, 5 is optional, but useful.

The Organisers Handbook will be revised each year so if you have suggestions for how to improve it, we'd love to hear from you.

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## **i. A Brief History**

Doors Open Days began in 1990 after discussions with John Gerrard (former Technical Director at the Scottish Civic Trust), the Bridgate Trust (which became Glasgow Building Preservation Trust), the Council and the organisers of the Glasgow European City of Culture Festival.

John Gerrard and his wife had come across the 'Open Monument Day' in Netherlands while on a working holiday. The concept was to open up buildings that were normally closed to the public for free to help raise awareness of the area's history, culture and architecture.

Knowing that Glasgow was to host a range of events as part of the 1990 European City of Culture Festival, he promoted the idea to Glasgow City Council and Glasgow Building Preservation Trust. The Council agreed to fund the event and was joined by Kyle and Carrick Civic Society who showcased buildings in Ayr.

DOD 1990 was a great success which inspired John and the team at the Scottish Civic Trust to promote the idea more widely. In 1991 a group of new areas took part and since then the event has snowballed into a truly Scotland-wide celebration of the built environment.

## **ii. What are the aims of Doors Open Days?**

The event aims to get the public interested in and excited by the built environment. Ultimately we hope that this interest will result in a lifetime enthusiasm for buildings and shared spaces and encourage people to get involved in planning the built environment of the future.

## **iii. How are Doors Open Days organised?**

Area coordinators manage the programme of events locally and are the main point of contact for event organisers and building owners such as you. Coordinators work for a variety of organisations – local councils, civic societies and heritage trusts. A few coordinate DOD as volunteers and no area coordinators are paid to work on DOD full time.

The Scottish Civic Trust is the national coordinator, responsible for a several areas of activity:

- national media and marketing

- event enhancement and programme development
- supporting the work of area coordinators
- development and external liaison
- acting a single point of contact for the public.

DOD is part of the European Heritage Days network which sees similar events take place every September in all 49 European member states, coordinated by the Council of Europe.

#### iv. What are the conditions for taking part in Doors Open Days?

**1. Access to your event or building must be free during Doors Open Days weekends.**

There are no exceptions to this, although you can give visitors the opportunity to leave donations.

AND

**2. Your building or site has architectural interest, historic importance or significant cultural connections.**

If you are organising an event, then it must relate to the history or architecture of the area, building or site.

AND (in order of preference)

**3. The building or site is normally closed to the public OR; the *part* of the building you are opening during Doors Open Days is normally closed to the public OR; the building or attraction is normally open to the public, but you are putting on a special event or activity.**

AND

**4. You have agreed your participation with your local area coordinator.**

Even if your proposed open day building or event satisfies the first three conditions, it is down to the local coordinating organisation to decide if you can take part in DOD. Reasons that you might be turned down are that the programme is focussing on one particular town or area; that the programme is 'themed' and your event doesn't link to it; or that the number of buildings taking part has to be limited. They will advise you about when the local DOD date is.

#### **v. Why take part in Doors Open Days?**

Buildings and event organisers will have many different reasons for taking part. Do you want to 'reach out' to the local community? Publicise a project? Increase membership of your organisation? Do you want to celebrate a special anniversary or fulfil a condition of grant? Perhaps you just think it is the right thing to do because you own a great building and you think the public should have access to it.

Whatever your reasons, it is good to think about them from the start, so you can plan around them. For example, is there information about joining your organisation? Do you want to put up a display?

#### **vi. What makes a successful event?**

A successful event will be fun and interesting for the visitor, enjoyable for the organiser and safe for everyone. It should also satisfy your original reason for taking part.

Ultimately, the biggest factor in the success of your event will be your planning.

# HEALTH AND SAFETY

No-one wants to be responsible for an accident, whether at work or at home. There are a few simple things you can do to reduce the chance of an accident taking place and these are outlined in the risk assessment guide either supplied with this document or downloadable at [www.doorsopendays.org.uk / Resources / Insurance and Risk Assessments](http://www.doorsopendays.org.uk/ Resources / Insurance and Risk Assessments)

Direct link: <http://www.doorsopendays.org.uk/opendays/resources.aspx?category=16>

## 1.1. Insurance

Every year, the Scottish Civic Trust organises Public Liability insurance on behalf of Doors Open Days participants. The insurance acts as a backup to your own building, business, organisation or personal insurance. For example, if you already have public liability insurance, the DOD insurance wouldn't be involved in a claim. However, if you don't have the right kind of insurance to cover an event like DOD, then the DOD insurance would come into play.

Take some time to read the summary of cover either supplied with this document or in the Resources / Insurance and Risk Assessments taking particular notice of the exclusions. These include hazardous activities, such as archery, and locations such as factories. If you are unsure about whether your building or event is covered, please get in touch with the Scottish Civic Trust in the first instance.

## 1.2. Risk Assessments

Risk assessments are simply a process for working out what hazards and risks there are and minimising or getting rid of them. Most of the thinking behind carrying out an assessment is common sense. A guide for carrying out an assessment can be found at the end of this document.

## 1.3. Security

The vast majority of people attending Doors Open Days do so because they are interested in buildings or local history. However, opportunistic theft is a possibility so think about the tiny minority who might have another agenda for visiting.

Ask yourself:

- Is it clear where visitors can and can't go?
- Have you locked rooms that have valuable contents?

- Have you put out of view and out of reach items such as a laptop, handbag, camera or wallet?
- Is there a steward available to watch particularly valuable or fragile items which are on display?

#### 1.4. Help!

Don't underestimate the number of people you will need to help on the day. Think about the various roles involved and match-up the people best placed to fulfil these roles.

- Do you want someone welcoming visitors?
- Does there need to be someone outside directing cars?
- What about tours?

It is a good idea to have the phone numbers of a few people who could be called up on the day to help out if visitor numbers are unexpectedly high or one of your helpers is unable to be there.

#### 1.5. The worst case scenario

Even the best-planned event can go wrong. Factors outside of your control may take over and it is important that you have a plan in place if it does. A visitor might become unwell, there might be a fire or an accident in your car park.

- If something does go wrong, do you know what you would do?
- Is there a fire alarm? Where would people congregate?

#### 1.6. Emergency Pack

It is a good idea to have a folder of important information to hand containing:

- emergency numbers
- the full address of the event location, including postcode and a grid reference if you are in a rural location, or are away from a public road
- the number for the local coordinator and the local police station
- the name and number of a first aider (if you have one) and a first aid kit
- the risk assessments

Make sure your volunteers or staff know where it is and if you have a large site, consider making copies of the pack and distributing them around your building.

## 2. ADMINISTRATION

Good organisation and administration will help your event run smoothly and ensure the right information gets out to the public.

### 2.1. Contact details

Although you might be the person who initiated your building's involvement in DOD, you may not be the person who actually has to organise the event. Equally, although you may be the Chair or Secretary of your organisation, another person might be coordinating the event. Make sure the area coordinator knows who the best person to contact is.

### 2.2. Stick to deadlines

Your area coordinator will ask you to submit information to them by certain dates. This is for a reason, and most commonly, it is so they can prepare the information for a leaflet or organise press coverage. If you want the best chance at getting visitors, stick to the deadlines. If you think you are going to miss a deadline, tell your coordinator as soon as you can.

### 2.3. Check your details

Accurate information is crucial if you are to have a successful event. So check all the details, even if they have been the same for several years. Double check your address, opening hours and any telephone numbers or email addresses that you are including. Sometimes a fresh pair of eyes will find it easier to spot a mistake so get someone else to read your event or building description.

Give people the information to decide whether they want to visit and whether they can visit. If there are 20 steps to reach the building and no alternative way of getting in, make sure potential visitors know. Equally, if you're offering free cups of tea, make sure the public knows!

### 2.4. Changes to your information

If you have submitted information which gives your opening hours as 10am-4pm – then make sure you *are* open during those hours. If you have no option but to change some details, or even cancel, then tell your area coordinator straight away. Do not wait until the last minute.

## 2.5. Surveys

Evaluating the success of Doors Open Days through surveys is crucial to its ongoing development and funding.

You can get copies from the national website [www.doorsopendays.org.uk](http://www.doorsopendays.org.uk) in the Resources / Surveys and Forms section or your area coordinator may supply them directly.

Direct link: <http://www.doorsopendays.org.uk/opendays/resources.aspx?category=17>

### *Visitor Surveys*

Every year we try to find out about the people who visit open days. This is so we can organise good publicity and provide the right information at the right time. It also helps us to prove with hard facts and figures how important Doors Open Days is to our funders and supporters, both locally and nationally.

Getting visitors to fill them in can be very simple, and there are few things you can do to help:

- If you are able, put the surveys in a prominent place at your venue
- Provide pens, a chair and table or surface to write on
- Remind visitors that there is an incentive for filling out a survey - the chance of winning a lovely book on Scottish architecture!
- If asked, explain the value of the surveys and reassure visitors that their details will be treated confidentially. Where contact details are left, SCT will not pass them on to a third party.
- If possible, make it someone's 'job' to hand out surveys or approach visitors. If visitors understand why it is important, they are more likely to fill out a survey and won't mind being approached.
- If there is no suitable spot for visitors to fill out surveys, then some visitors may be willing to take them home and send them directly to me
- Your area coordinator will let you know where you should send the completed surveys: either to the Scottish Civic Trust directly or to them. Some coordinators may plan to collect the surveys from you.

### *Building owner / event organiser surveys*

These are for you to fill out and tell us about your experience of taking part in DOD. If you have suggestions for how to organise or publicise the event in the future, this is your opportunity to tell us. Likewise we want to hear what you thought of your own event. Was it popular? How many visitors did you get?

## 2.6. Memories

You'll often find that the people visiting you have a personal connection to your site. They may have great stories and you could find a way of recording what they have to say. You can make a written note of what they say or you could use a digital camera or mobile phone to record a short video of them. Most modern cameras and phones allow you to record video or audio files. Make sure you have permission from them to use the files and make it public.

Once you have the anecdote or story, get in touch with the Scottish Civic Trust and we might be able to post it on the national website!

## 2.7. Scottish Archaeology Month (SAM)

SAM is the parallel, archaeological version of DOD. It runs throughout September, not just at weekends and, like DOD, is part of the European Heritage Days network of events.

If there is an archaeological component to your site or event, consider contacting Archaeology Scotland who coordinate SAM and register your details (see Contacts page of Handbook). If your site has been subject to archaeological work, you could create an exhibition or activity based on this. There might have been some interesting archaeological finds in the area which you might want to tell people about or you might think about hosting an archaeological group or society at your venue. The deadlines for participation in SAM are usually around May, so get in touch with Archaeology Scotland at the earliest opportunity.

By taking part, your event will be listed alongside other SAM events, increasing publicity and drawing in a new audience. As with DOD, your event must be free.

## 3. MANAGING VISITORS

### 3.1. Visitor numbers

One of the greatest concerns for event organisers can be the possibility that they will get too many visitors. However, there are a number of strategies which will help you control this.

#### *Limit numbers*

When you are planning your event think about how many people you'd ideally like to visit. If you are organising a tour and feel that 20 people is your limit, then consider making it a booking-only event. Remember that your area coordinator is unlikely to be able to take bookings on your behalf so think about who could take on this role. Providing an email address and a telephone number with an answer phone facility is a good idea and if the telephone is only in use at certain times, make sure this is reflected in the text you send about your event.

If you have a small space, think about whether a steward could manage a queuing system where only a set number of people would be allowed in. As people left, new visitors could be allowed in. Is there a display you could put up to entertain visitors while they wait?

#### *Opening times*

If your coordinator allows it, might shorter opening hours help? Or might you get 100 people in one hour rather than 100 over four?

#### *Visitor experience*

Consider the type of experience you want to give visitors. If visitors are going to walk around by themselves, you might be able to accept more visitors than if say, you wanted to tightly control access and give a presentation.

#### *High visitor numbers*

Work out what you would do if more visitors than expected turned up. If it is a booking event, what would you do if people just turned up anyway? If the site or event is open to all, is there someone you could call on the day to lend a hand? Think about what impact high visitors number might have. Is there somewhere for them to wait if a room or space is full? Could car parking become a problem? Or would you simply have a tiring day!

### 3.2. Signage and route planning

A great way to work out how visitors might go around your site or building is to put yourself in their shoes. Imagine arriving on the street – is it obvious where the entrance is? Remember you have banners and balloons to help (discussed in section 5.10). When visitors come in the door, which way would you like them to go?

If at all possible, a circular route, going in one direction is the simplest format. How will visitors know which way to go? Are you going to lead groups round, or have stewards pointing the way, or would signs help?

If the site is large, could you produce a simple map to help people navigate?

### 3.3. Cars and car parking

We try to encourage visitor to travel to DOD venues by public transport. However, you may find that because of your location or personal preference, visitors will arrive by car. Your area coordinator will want to know if you can offer visitors parking or whether there is parking nearby. Make sure this information is accurate and stick to the commitment once it is made.

Think about how many visitors you may get any one time and where they will be able to park. If you anticipate high numbers, think about having stewards on hand to guide drivers. Do you need to mark the carpark entrance and exit?

Also think about the route to your carparking area.

- Can cars pass easily on the road to your building?
- Is there somewhere for cars to turn around?

### 3.4. Accessibility

Visitors may have a wide range of different needs. Some might find rough ground a problem; others might have poor eyesight or find steps difficult. By definition, many DOD venues will be in old or unusual locations so making the space open to all will be an extra challenge.

Simple changes might be all that is needed – some matting over a rough area, some bright tape to warn of a low beam or a step. If you have an area that can only be reached by steps, consider having an exhibition on the ground level.

If you plan to create a leaflet about your site, make the print large and make sure the text and its background contrast well. White on a colour will be harder to read than black text on a plain background.

For more ideas about making your event accessible read the Education sections.

### 3.5. Dogs

Think about whether dogs are going to be allowed at your site. If not it is important that this is made clear to visitors. Think about:

- Is there somewhere visitors can leave them safely?
- Is the carpark area shaded?
- If you are leading a walking tour and you are permitting dogs, do you want them to be on a leash?

### 3.6. Photography

Many visitors will want a record of their visit – especially if it is to a place they wouldn't normally get into.

- What is your policy on visitors taking photographs?
- Might you want to restrict photographs in some areas of your building?
- Would you mind if a photograph was published or someone made money from it?

Remember that if you are planning on taking photographs at the event, you must have the permission of the parents/guardians of children under 18 who feature in a shot. A sample photographic release form is attached at the end of this document.

### 3.7. Bad weather

Scottish weather in September can be a joy or a misery, so make sure you plan for both!

- Is there somewhere that visitors can put their umbrellas?
- Is there a mat for people to wipe their muddy feet?
- If you're planning a walk, could it still go ahead if was raining? Is there a wet-weather alternative? A venue perhaps where you could give a talk instead?
- If bad weather would affect the running of your event, make sure this is mentioned in the text you supply your area coordinator.

### 3.8. Children

We hope that children and young people will be encouraged to visit DOD venues. When planning for your event, think about what activities you might be able to put on. A separate document with educational ideas will be produced by SCT. You should also think about the height of exhibitions, whether hazards exist for children and how you want parents to supervise their kids.

### 3.9. Difficult customers

Occasionally, you might come across a visitor who is hard to handle. They might have a million questions, find fault in everything or have erratic behaviour that affects other people's visit. Firstly, remember that you are in control. You have opened your doors or organised an event so it is up to you to set the ground rules for how people behave.

A few tactics may help, depending on the situation:

- Be firm but fair, friendly but assertive. If you are getting lots of questions from someone and this is holding up a tour, explain that you have to move on but you can take questions at the end of the tour.
- If a visitor has a complaint, listen to them. Most people with a concern just want to know they have been heard and that their points will be acted on. If they are fair complaints then apologise and see if there is a way to fix them. Don't interrupt them and don't respond aggressively yourself.
- Mostly visitors will do what you tell them if they understand why. For example, a visitor might be unhappy that you've asked them to hold the hand of their child that is running about. But when you explain that there is a steep staircase around the corner, they'll understand and should respond positively.
- If a visitor really is causing problems – by shouting, acting aggressively, endangering themselves or other people – calmly but firmly ask them to leave. If they refuse, explain that your only option is to contact the police and do so.

## 4. MANAGING VOLUNTEERS / STAFF

### 4.1. Before the event

Make sure everyone who is going to be helping on the day is familiar with:

- The risk assessment
- Emergency procedures
- Their role and when they are 'on duty'.
- Your contact details – preferably a mobile phone number

Ideally, you'll have had the chance to run through the activities and tours so you can judge things like timing and visitor flow.

### 4.2. Break-times and rotas

Running a DOD can be hugely rewarding but it can also be tiring! Create a rota for everyone so that they can have a taste of doing different activities – even if it is just stewarding a different area. And make sure break-times for tea/coffee and lunch are included. If someone needs to nip off to the bathroom, is there someone else who can take over their duty? Do you want to have sandwiches available at your site to save time?

### 4.3. After the event

Most events rely on a huge amount of goodwill. Take the time to thank the people who have helped or contributed and think about whether a card, letter, box of chocolates or celebration is in order.

## 5. PUBLICITY AND PROMOTION

Event organisers are often concerned that they won't get many visitors. In previous years, around 32% of organisers say that this is a worry and 15% report that they had fewer than expected visitors.

There are several things you can do to give your building or event the best chance at attracting visitors.

### 5.1. Organise an event

There is a clear link between organisers who plan events at their building and good visitor figures. Rather than simply having stewards, why not have them lead tours or organise a quiz? Could you link up with another local heritage, arts or voluntary group to put on activities or have an exhibition? Would a local school like to contribute in some way?

### 5.2. Do something different

If you have opened your doors for several years or run the same event, chances are visitor numbers will dwindle. This is because local people will have visited before and are looking for something new to go to. Think about what you could do differently and make sure your area coordinator knows so the new event is listed in publicity material.

### 5.3. If you don't ask, you don't get

You might think that to organise a special event, you need lots of cash. In fact, sometimes just asking is all you need. For example, is there a local artist or architect who you could approach to give a talk? Would a craftsperson be willing to come along and show their work? Perhaps in exchange for the chance to sell their products? If you need a bit of cash to make an event happen, would a local business sponsor you? What could you offer them in return?

### 5.4. Cooperate and coordinate

Find out where else is opening in your area and cooperate with them. Make sure visitors to your building know about the others in the area and likewise, ask nearby venue to tell their visitors about you. Are there leaflets you can distribute to encourage visitors to come along? Could stewards from one of the other venues give you hand if you're overwhelmed by visitors?

## 5.5. Timing is everything

If you are offering tours, make sure you know how long it will take to complete a 'circuit'. Have a trial run and factor in time to answer questions. If you say your walk or tour takes 30 minutes, make sure it really does so that visitors can plan their day and aren't trying to break away from the group early.

## 5.6. Sell your site

Make sure that the information you pass on to your area coordinator actually reflects what is happening on the day. A dry, technical description of a building is not likely to attract many visitors. Think about highlighting some interesting details about the building or area and talk about the great activities taking place. Don't give visitors unrealistic expectations though!

## 5.7. Generate your own publicity

Think about doing your own publicity. Don't just rely on the local leaflet or the efforts of your area coordinator. Does your group or organisation have a newsletter or an email list? Are there other organisations that could help spread the word? Would local shops or attractions put up a poster for you? What about contacting local radio or newspapers? If you decide you want to do some publicity, *make sure you let your area coordinator know.*

## 5.8. Writing a news release

### 5.8.1. Top Tips for writing a successful news release

- Make sure your news release is interesting and **newsworthy**
- Make sure the first 10 words of your press release are effective. If not the journalist may not read beyond them!
- Stick to the facts
- Avoid flowery language and excessive use of adjectives such as 'wonderful', 'fantastic' etc.
- Think about your audience. If your news release is for a local paper then make it local, e.g. mention the name of the town or area in the title of the release.
- Try to get a contact name in the paper or media outlet for you to send your release to direct.

- Call first before sending release. Get a name, email address or fax number and then send release, ideally with an image or two.
- There is no need to spend hours thinking about a great title for your release – it is unlikely to be used as the editor or sub-editor will come up with their own.
- Don't be put off by journalists appearing gruff or uninterested on the phone. They rely on people like you giving them good stories to make good copy.
- Don't forget to add your contact details.
- Remember to get permission if you are sending a news release about.
- Remember the five golden rules: Who, What, Why, Where and When.

### 5.8.2. Suggested news release structure

#### Title of release

It should be short and attention grabbing. Remember you are writing for a journalist who is likely to have hundreds of press releases pass his/her desk every week

- i. The first paragraph should open with an interesting newsworthy sentence. The first paragraph should summarise all the information you are communicating. Remember the golden rules - Who, What, Why, Where and When.
- ii. The second paragraph should contain more details and specific information. Journalist like facts and statistics so try to add interesting and eye-catching facts and figures if you can.
- iii. The third paragraph is often a quote to support the news. Quotes from politicians, particularly MSPS, Cabinet Ministers and local councillors are a good way to guarantee publication. If sending to a local paper try to make sure you get a good quote from a local politician or member of the business community. A celebrity, if you can find one, will always appeal to a news journalist.
- iv. If you are promoting a sponsored event a quote from the sponsor can also be added, although it is less likely to be used by the press.
- v. The final paragraph is often used to provide contact details, reminder of times, dates etc or sponsors details.

### 5.8.3. Photography

A good photograph will always help get your news release noticed. If relevant always try to make sure you include people in your photograph. Try to avoid the typical 'handshake', 'presentation', 'standing outside or beside something' photograph. Quirky, humorous photographs are more likely to be noticed as are photographs with children. N.B. If you are submitting photographs with children in them make sure you have permission from the parent or guardian. A Photographic Release form can be found in the Surveys and Forms section of the national website.

Direct link: <http://www.doorsopendays.org.uk/opendays/resources.aspx?category=17>

If you cannot afford to use a professional photographer then ask around to see who is interested in photography. Try to make sure your photographs are as good as possible. Of course, in many cases the newspaper will send its own photographer out.

Most images are now digital. When sending your image to the press be careful of the size. It is a good idea to send low-resolution images first of all (72 dpi, under 100kb) but make it clear that high-resolution versions are available. Print media normally requires 300 dpi images high-resolution. Another good reason to find someone in your organisation who is interested in photography is that they will understand digital image sizes and formats.

Images for the web-based news sites do not need to be as high-resolution as those for print media but it is always worth finding out if there are specific size requirements before sending.

### 5.9. Word of mouth

Word of mouth is an incredibly powerful publicity tool and many DOD visitors hear about events through friends and relatives. So make sure you're telling your friends and relatives about the event you're organising and ask them to spread the word too.

### 5.10. Banners and balloons

On the day of your event, make sure it is clear where your building or event start point is. You have a banner and a pack of balloons to help you. These make visitors feel welcome

and can attract visitors who were passing by the building and perhaps had never heard of DOD.

### *Banners*

You will be issued with one banner, measuring 3.5m x0.5m, made from tough blue PVC with white writing on. It can be hung horizontally or vertically and has a series of metal eyelets to help you secure it. Banners cost around £40 each so it is very important that you keep a track of where the banner is in the lead up to your event and afterwards so you can either hand it back to your area coordinator or store it until next year.

Banners need to be securely fastened to your building with string. Do not use glue, nails or anything that could damage your building. If the day is going to be windy, make sure the banner will not flap or billow out.

**If you would like to place a banner near or on a public road (eg on railings beside a junction) you must discuss this with your area coordinator. Because this is an issue of public safety, departments within the local council may need to be consulted.**

### *Balloons*

You will be given 20 blue balloons with Doors Open Days written on them. They are biodegradable and should be cut down and disposed of after the event. They can be used to line the way to a hidden entrance or used to mark the point along a tour. You may need to provide string to attach the balloons.

If you have too many balloons, why not given them out to families to take away?

## 5.11. Location, location, location

Sites that are especially vulnerable to poor visitor numbers are those that are on their own in a remote or rural location. You will need to work especially hard to promote your event and make sure that visitors see it as worth their while making an effort to visit you.

## 5.12. Social networking

DOD now uses social networking sites (Facebook and Twitter) to enhance its online presence. Online social networks allow people who share interests, activities and ideas to stay in touch, pass on news and share information. We know that many people hear about Doors Open Days by 'word-of-mouth', from friends, relatives, neighbours and work colleagues – social networking is the 21<sup>st</sup> century version of this.

The particular benefits of social networking include:

- Developing online communities, linking ‘building baggers’, casual visitors and those with a general interest in Scotland’s heritage and architecture, along with event organisers, building owners and media, marketing, heritage and tourism professionals.
- Creating a dialogue between these groups. This two-way communication is especially useful for creating a sense of ownership amongst DOD’s online community, and also for getting direct feedback from visitors.
- Using a mixture of stories, quizzes, polls, discussions and features, with strong interactive elements where possible.
- Linking to podcasts, film footage and photographs to supplement existing event listings, generating additional interest and inspiring visitors.
- Enabling programme details to be drip-fed as they are released to SCT, providing instant news items and points of discussion and visitor feedback.
- Alerting users to last-minute changes.

From an area coordinator’s point of view, social networking can respond to local, specific marketing needs. For example, this could include publicising a late addition to a programme, encouraging attendance at a booking event if figures are low, highlighting a wider marketing campaign, or making appeals on behalf of event organisers.

#### *Facebook*

You can find our page on Facebook by searching for ‘Doors Open Days’ at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com). We use this site to give updates on upcoming events, post photos, and to instigate discussions. To become one of our fans, click the ‘Like’ button at the top of our Facebook page. If there’s any information you’d like us to post on the page, just get in touch!

#### *Twitter*

You can find us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/doorsopendays>. We use Twitter a little more often than Facebook: to point to interesting online articles, create dialogue with other individuals and organisations, give up-to-date information regarding events, and to build up a ‘buzz’ surrounding DOD in the weeks leading up to the event.

### 5.13. Spread the word!

You may want to consider putting Facebook and Twitter buttons on your websites, in your newsletters, or in your embedded email signatures, in order to strengthen the sites’ online presence, allowing easy access to the sites.

If you decide to set up a Facebook or Twitter account for your own area, please remember to link your site to ours by adding us as a 'friend' or 'follower' so that the network between us remains strong.

## 6. USEFUL CONTACTS

The national coordinating organisation is:

The Scottish Civic Trust

The Tobacco Merchants House,

42 Miller Street

Glasgow G1 1DT

Telephone: 0141 221 1466

Email: [dod@scottishcivictrust.org.uk](mailto:dod@scottishcivictrust.org.uk)

Website: [www.doorsopendays.org.uk](http://www.doorsopendays.org.uk) | [www.scottishcivictrust.org.uk](http://www.scottishcivictrust.org.uk)

The national coordinator is Abigail Daly

Scottish Archaeology Month coordinating organisation is:

Archaeology Scotland

Suite 1a, Stuart House

Eskmills, Station Road

Musselburgh, EH21 7PB

Telephone: 0845 782 3333

Email: [info@archaeologyscotland.org.uk](mailto:info@archaeologyscotland.org.uk)

Website: [www.scottisharchaeology.org.uk](http://www.scottisharchaeology.org.uk)

The national coordinator is Mags McCartney