

RSA

Scotland

September 2008 Newsletter

'We are at an exciting time in the evolution of the RSA - both universally and in Scotland.'

Welcome from the Chair

As new Chair of the RSA in Scotland, I am delighted to welcome you to this first edition of our "new look" newsletter for RSA Fellows in Scotland. Through this, combined with our new website (details below), we aim to keep you up to date with everything which is happening with the RSA.

At our exciting Fellows Conference last year, Fellows asked for improved communications; more engagement, and the development of Scotland-specific projects.

We have made progress in all of those areas, which you can read about in this newsletter, and have ambitious plans for much more. The appointment of our new Outreach Coordinator for Scotland represents a significant investment from RSA Trustees, and will transform our ability to work with partners to generate real progress in our chosen project areas, and through our Fellowship be able to deliver capacity, commitment and innovation in communities from the global to the local.

Working with colleagues on the new RSA Scotland Committee, which was elected in June, we are focussing our work around the following objectives:

- The profile and reputation of the RSA in Scotland will be enhanced
- All Fellows in Scotland will be given the opportunity, and encouraged, to become actively involved in all aspects of the RSA, and will clearly understand how they can do so.
- Innovative and relevant projects and partnerships, which demonstrate the difference we make and influence on policy and decision-makers, will be developed, working with the Fellowship in Scotland

We are at an exciting time in the evolution of the RSA - both universally and in Scotland - and I look forward to meeting with many of you over the coming months to hear your views on how we can collectively contribute to transformational change which removes the barriers to social progress, and work together to provide a platform for critical debate and new ideas.

Warmest wishes,

Louise

Louise Macdonald FRSA



Louise Macdonald FRSA, Chair of RSA Scotland Committee, photo by Rob Macdougall

What's new?

New look for RSA Scotland

You may have noticed that this month's newsletter looks different and you may want to check out our new Scotland website www.thersa.org/scotland. RSA Scotland has made a commitment to reinvigorating and improving upon its communications with Fellows. A big thank you goes to Gemma Bell FRSA, Stripe Communications, for leading this process and to Sharliza Rahman, RSA website editor. Please let us know what you think of our new look!

New Outreach Coordinator for Scotland

On July 21st, Judith Friedman took up her post as full-time Outreach Coordinator for the RSA in Scotland. Her role will involve working closely with Scottish Fellows to create regional and topical networks, which will serve to develop the project and programme areas of the RSA's activities to identify and tackle barriers to social progress in Scotland.

Through this post, the RSA endeavours to stimulate positive social change by tapping into the vast expertise and experience of its Fellowship in Scotland. Throughout the next few months, Judith will be travelling throughout the country to facilitate meetings with individual Fellows, lead discussion groups, support events and connect Fellows with each other for the creation of relevant networks. She will also be responsible for supporting and implementing locally-based RSA projects and encouraging Fellow-led project development.

The RSA wants to tap into, build and nurture the talent and innovation that already exists within the RSA Fellowship in Scotland. The Outreach Coordinator intends to form a stronger cohesive link between the RSA and the Fellowship and enhance engagement and communication throughout the UK.

If you are interested in connecting with the RSA or other Fellows, or have a local project you would like the RSA to be involved in, please feel free to get in touch.

Judith Friedman Outreach Coordinator, Scotland
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The Power of Apology

At the RSA Scotland lecture held on 7 May, Professor Alice Brown FRSA, Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, presented the case in favour of helping public services deliver meaningful apologies to customers. Held at the Scottish Parliament and hosted by Mike Rumbles MSP, the lecture attracted elected representatives, managers and policy makers within public services, as well as individuals from the voluntary sector and organisations advising complainants.

Professor Brown said:

"If a culture of blame prevails in the public sector, that is detrimental to the individual, the service provider and ultimately society as a whole. I would like us to build instead a culture of service, where saying 'sorry' is not seen as an admission of liability, but instead is a powerful tool in rebuilding trust between citizens and organisations".

In her efforts to challenge this culture of blame, she drew on the experiences of organisations that have successfully managed to restore a positive relationship between themselves and the public by apologising when things go wrong. Professor Brown explored the possibility of Scotland introducing new legislation to overcome the barriers to apology. She also brought to light the successful change in legislation in other countries to highlight how public bodies can apologise to their customers without fear of litigation.

Towards a More Employable Scotland

Skills at all levels are vital for Scotland's economic performance; yet there are significant numbers of people not in work, training or education and there is evidence of under-employment amongst those in work. On 12 June this event, organised in partnership with Careers Scotland, looked at how the public, voluntary and private sectors could work together most effectively in order to encourage individuals to gain the skills and motivation for work and the ability to respond to the changing needs of the workplace.

Professor Alan McGregor (Director of the Training and Employment Research Unit and Professor of Economic Development at the University of Glasgow) set the context for the evening in his keynote speech. There then followed brief input from five Panel members representing employers, guidance, skills development, education and health.

The 61 delegates formed discussion groups to analyse the current situation from different social, economic and learning perspectives in order to identify key issues, barriers to progress and the priorities for action.

The next stage is to focus on specific areas for action and it is expected that RSA Scotland and Careers Scotland will be running further events in support of this.

The Challenges of Western Liberalism: RSA at the Edinburgh International Book Festival

Political commentator, foreign policy advisor to Republican presidential candidate Senator John McCain and author Robert Kagan posed some of the urgent questions facing the democratic world today to a capacity audience at the Edinburgh International Book Festival on August 22. Kagan, who is also a senior associate of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, addressed from his perspective the complex challenges of Western liberalism. The talk, chaired by Iain Macwhirter, award winning political columnist for the *The Sunday Herald*, and organised by the RSA, provoked insightful questions by RSA Fellows about interventionism and the American presidential campaign.



Iain Macwhirter and Robert Kagan, photo by Alicia Senior-Saywell

RSA Fellows - Project Spotlight:

Helensburgh Heroes – Regeneration through Heritage & Culture by Phil Worms FRSA

Scotland has produced some of the finest scientific, creative and business people that have ever lived. And many of them have very strong links with Helensburgh. From the inventor of television, to a multi Oscar® nominated actress, to the pioneers of the Glasgow Arts movement. We have identified over 65 people that have made significant contributions to society.

The influence of the people that were born or lived in the area extends far beyond the boundaries of the Clyde's Garden City, and yet there is so little tangible evidence to formally recognise their achievements

Helensburgh Heroes has been created as a vehicle to address this situation.

It aims to build and manage leisure, arts and tourist facilities that will educate, inform, entertain and above all, inspire future generations to emulate the area's famous sons and daughters.

We have identified two projects which may set us on our way. The introduction of Scotland's first 'Hollywood' style walk of fame and the conversion of a derelict, Patterson designed, former School building into a living arts centre. www.helensburghheroes.com

If you would like to get involved at some level please contact Phil Worms FRSA on 07788923055 or phil@helensburghheroes.com. This project was featured in The Observer on Sunday, 31 August 2008 www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2008/aug/31/helensburgh.heroes

Get Connected...RSA Networks

RSA Networks began following a series of conversations with Fellows that revealed a desire to engage more fully in our daily work. Fellows told us that they would like to find more meaningful ways of working together and of becoming active participants in delivering positive social change.

Part of this project has been the creation of a sophisticated, yet accessible, online networking platform to enable Fellows to connect and collaborate with each other in new ways. It is a marketplace for new thinking and a space where Fellows can post and discuss new ideas as well as find support to develop them. It will also be an opportunity to tap into the collective knowledge and experience of the Fellowship and connect with a diverse and thoughtful group of people: making the Fellowship 'searchable', more visible and more accessible. There is a tremendous need for Scottish representation on the existing forum. Online networks can be translated into offline discussions, lectures and projects if there is sufficient interest. You can quickly and simply log onto the platform on <http://networks.thersa.org/>. Please contact Judith Friedman with any questions: Judith.friedman@rsa.org.uk.

The RSA is working with Fellows to transform the organisation into a dynamic hub for civic innovation - igniting passions and opportunities among Fellows

What's Happening? RSA Events in Scotland

Launch of New Bilingualism Advisory Service:

Monday 29 September 2008 6pm-8pm
Playfair Library, Old College at the University of Edinburgh

Speakers: Professor Sorace and colleagues are working on the development of a bilingualism advisory service at the University to bridge the gap between researchers and the community to enable more children to benefit from bilingualism.

www.bilingualism-matters.org.uk

To attend email: erin.king@ed.ac.uk or write to Erin King, Knowledge Transfer Secretary, College of Humanities & Social Science, The University of Edinburgh, 1 - 7 Roxburgh Street, Edinburgh EH8 9TA by 19 September 2008.

New Design in Heritage Settings- the Angus Millar Lecture

Monday 13 October 2008 6pm-8pm
Royal College of Physicians, 9 Queen Street, Edinburgh

Speakers: Cezary Bednarski FRSA and Professor Daniele Pini (Ferrara), Event Chair: Dr Lester Borley CBE. Full speaker biographies will be available on the RSA Scotland website. Daniele Pini has a degree in architecture at the Istituto Universitario di Architettura di Venezia (IUAV) and is Professor of Urban Planning at the Facoltà di Architettura, Università degli Studi di Ferrara. Cezary Bednarski is a chartered architect with 28 years experience, ranging through a broad scope of building types. He is involved in the 21st Century Trust and the RIBA Panel of Competition Assessors.

Tickets available from Mrs Ann Packard FRSA, 81 annpackard_ppt@onetel.com 81 Cumberland Street, Edinburgh, EH3 6RD. Guests are particularly welcome.

New Fellows' Reception

Wednesday 15 October 2008 6pm-8pm.
Edinburgh, Venue TBC

If you recently joined the RSA and want to learn more about the Society and meet other Scottish Fellows in a fun, informal setting, please feel free to come along. Contact Judith.Friedman@rsa.org.uk for more information.

RSA Media and Creative Industries Special Interest Group*

Dovecot Tapestry Studio Tour

Tuesday, 9 September 2008 6.30pm - 8pm, £15 p/h
Infirmary Street, Edinburgh

The future of the press in post-devolution Scotland

Monday 15 September 6pm, £5 p/h,
Anderson Strathern LLP, Rutland Ct, Edinburgh
Speaker: Charles McGhee, Editor, The Herald
Sponsored by Anderson Strathern LLP.

The future of Public Service Broadcasting in Scotland

Thursday 9 October 2008 1:00pm.
Royal Society of Edinburgh, George Street, Edinburgh.

With speakers from Scottish Broadcasting Commission, OFCOM and a Q&A with a panel of politicians, this event, in conjunction with Ofcom, follows previous PSB events. Registration via nicky.honan@ofcom.org.uk stating if you are an RSA Fellow.

On-line and Multi-platform Initiatives and tour of BBC

Tuesday 4 November 2008 6pm-8pm.
BBC Pacific Quay, Glasgow

For all of the above, any enquiries to Ann Packard (see Angus Millar Lecture details)

*Such groups are approved by the RSA's Board of Trustees and, in common with other Special Interest Groups, are autonomous and self-funding



Rosie Anderson (RSA staff) and Sheila Cannell FRSA, photo by Rob Macdougall

Looking Forward:

Design and Sustainability

In the RSA Scotland Conference in November 2007, fellows identified design and sustainability as a focus for the RSA's activities in Scotland.

We are currently looking for Fellows who are interested in being a part of a small working group which will help to support Scotland's strategy and project development in this arena. To express your interest, please contact the Outreach Coordinator:

Scottish Government Consultations

As an extension of the RSA's commitment to civic innovation and to furthering social progress, the RSA in Scotland will be monitoring and responding to Scottish Government Consultations on issues that are important to our fellows. If you are interested in being a part of a group which works to deliver official RSA responses to issues affecting social progress in Scotland, please contact us.



Robert Porrer FRSA, Deputy Chair of RSA Scotland, Committee photo by Rob McDougall

RSA Scotland Response to the Scottish Government's Consultation on Proposals for a Scottish Climate Change Bill

Climate Change has become a major political issue, in Scotland as in other parts of the world. Earlier this year the Scottish Government proposed a Climate Change Bill, with some high profile targets such as reducing overall emissions by 80% by 2050. The RSA Scotland response to the earlier consultation on Climate Change is on the website.

The RSA Scotland committee seeks your views on a further consultation paper published by the Scottish Government, either via email or at a possible meeting.

The paper is entitled 'Adapting our ways, Managing Scotland's climate risk, a consultation to inform Scotland's climate change adaptation framework' and was published in June (<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/06/23/13244/0>). The consultation can also be seen at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations>.

Andrew Milligan, RSA Committee member, is coordinating the Society's response.



Marie Burns, Director of Skills Interventions at Skills Development Scotland, photo by Rob McDougall

Visit to Findhorn Eco-Village

Community member, Rose Moloney FRSA, is willing to coordinate an event, next spring, for RSA Fellows at the longest established eco-village in the UK. Findhorn is a living example of sustainability at a community level through the use of windmills, solar-power and the Living Machine for processing sewage. A guided tour and talks on Findhorn's work and project with the UN can be arranged. Accommodation can be provided in eco-houses or community members' guesthouses in the charming fishing village nearby.

To find out more or to engage in any of these opportunities, please contact Judith Friedman, Judith.friedman@rsa.org.uk.

RSA Scotland Committee 2008-2009

Chair:	Louise Macdonald	louisem@youngscot.org
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