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ROBERT BURNS HELPS AYRSHIRE KIDS BECOME WORKFORCE FOR THE FUTURE

- **Primary 7 pupils from Kincaidston Primary School learned heritage skills at Robert Burns Birthplace Museum and Cottage**
- **Museum and Cottage dedicated to Scotland's national bard inspired a new guided walk developed by the children**
- **National Trust for Scotland's Workforce for the Future project aims to develop career skills and increase access to heritage**

A group of primary schoolchildren from Ayr have created a new guided walk at Robert Burns Birthplace Museum and Cottage thanks to a new education project by the National Trust for Scotland.

The seven-week Workforce for the Future project saw the P7 Kincaidston Primary School class take part in a series of workshops at the Museum and Burns Cottage, both cared for by the conservation charity, to learn more about the life of Robert Burns, his work and the Scots language used within it, as well as his importance to Scotland and the impact he has on the economy.

Alongside discovering more about the national bard, the class also learned about the different staff who contribute to the running of the museum and cottage. They were taught how to handle objects from the museum's displays from the Collections Care team, den building and bushcraft skills from the Gardeners and joined volunteer guides to get inspiration to develop their own guided walks.

The workshops are part of the Workforce for the Future project, designed to connect museums with young people and funded by Art Fund. The National Trust for Scotland team at Robert Burns Birthplace Museum joined up with Museum Galleries Scotland to deliver the project which aims to develop young people's employability skills, increase their confidence, and help them learn about careers in the heritage sector. The project coincides with Heritage Careers Week, which runs from 28 Oct to 1 November.

The project at Robert Burns Birthplace Museum was led by National Trust for Scotland Learning Manager Chris Waddell.

Chris commented: "Connecting with the young people over the last six weeks during the workshops has been amazing and really supported their learning by having this dedicated time to focus on different areas of Burns' life as well as his importance to South Ayrshire. The workshops have helped instil good team working and

communication as well as hone their research skills to develop the guided walks as the final outcome from the project.”

“The Workforce for the Future project supports our vision to provide access to and enjoyment of Scotland’s special places. Our conservation charity is working to become a learning organisation, and to enable a greater diversity of people and communities to access our properties and improve their health and wellbeing. We’re delighted to support the project with Kincaidston Primary and connect its pupils with Scotland’s nature, beauty and heritage.”

John Campbell, Museums Galleries Scotland Senior Skills Development Manager, said: “We’re thrilled to have supported the Workforce for the Future project at Robert Burns Birthplace Museum. The pupils at Kincaidston Primary have been very engaged throughout the project, which has resulted in them creating a fantastic, guided walk for their families to enjoy. The enthusiasm for the project by the staff at the Museum created an incredible experience for the young people that has helped them to learn about work in the heritage sector.”

Rachael Stone, Kincaidston Primary School class teacher, said: “It’s been fantastic having our young people take part in the project as it’s helped them develop new skills and build their confidence and knowledge around Robert Burns at the same time. We’ve really appreciated the time and care the staff at the Trust have shown to them, engaging with them on the different roles involved in running the museum as well as supporting them to research, develop and deliver their guided tour around Burns Cottage, Poet’s Path, the Auld Alloway Kirk and the Burns Monument Gardens, which was great fun.”

Projects like Workforce for the Future at Robert Burns Birthplace Museum, support the National Trust for Scotland’s vision to care for, share and protect Scotland’s natural and cultural heritage, as outlined in its strategy launched in 2022, and contributes to its engagement objectives to provide access and enjoyment for everyone and be a learning organisation.

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Editors Notes

Images - <https://www.flickr.com/gp/133918740@N04/RAD506sp1Z>

About the National Trust for Scotland

Established in 1931, the National Trust for Scotland is Scotland’s largest conservation charity and cares for, shares and speaks up for Scotland’s magnificent heritage.

Over the last 90 years the Trust has pioneered public access to and shared ownership of some of the most magnificent buildings, collections and landscapes in Scotland. It cares for more than 100 sites, from ancient houses to battlefields, castles, mills, gardens, coastlines, islands, mountain ranges and the plants and animals which depend upon them.

In March 2022 the National Trust for Scotland launched *Nature, Beauty & Heritage for Everyone*, its ten-year strategy which sets out the ambitions of the charity over the coming decade. From speaking up for Scotland's heritage which doesn't have a voice, to improving the lives and wellbeing of people across the country, and responding to the climate and biodiversity crisis, the Trust will build on its work in recent years to grow its impact and conserve and restore more of Scotland's heritage, as it moves towards its centenary in 2031.

Scotland's largest membership organisation, the National Trust for Scotland relies on the support of its members and donors to carry out its important work.

For more information on the National Trust for Scotland visit www.nts.org.uk.

The National Trust for Scotland is a charity registered in Scotland, Charity Number SC 007410.