

# **Celebrating 20 years of OneCity Trust**

**An event at the City Chambers hosted by the Rt Hon Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh and President of the OneCity Trust, Robert Aldridge, celebrated the work of the Trust in the past two decades.**

The Trust was established in 2003 in response to the OneCity report of the Lord Provost's Commission on Social Exclusion. It engages the idea of a 'community foundation' to give people and organisations a means to reach across the divides of the city and support those who are excluded from the community.

A permanent endowment was established with a donation from the City of Edinburgh Council, which the Trust has added to over the years, and continues to build.

In 2012 with the creation of the 'Lord Provost's Rapid Action Fund' the Trust acquired the ability to raise funds specifically for the purpose of administering grants to projects and organisations across the city.

The evening began with an exhibition of the Trust's archive, showcasing historic documents, photos, and other objects. This was followed by speeches and roundtable discussions focussed on the Trust's work since 2003 in the context of the two poverty commissions which have reported on the situation in Edinburgh.

The celebratory reception concluded events with a keynote speech from the Lord Provost and President of the OCT, followed by a short film on the Trust's work and a musical accompaniment.

The OneCity Trust is seeking donations to continue its work fighting poverty, inequality, and social exclusion in Edinburgh. Donations can be made [online via the Trust's webpage.](#)

The Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh and President of the OneCity Trust, Robert Aldridge said: "I am immensely proud of the work that the OneCity Trust has undertaken in the last twenty years. To date, we have delivered over £1.3m of grants to 265 projects across the Capital whilst promoting community benefits and social value amongst our city's business and private sector community.

I have no doubt that these efforts have made a positive difference to the lives of our residents. Over the years we have been able to support organisations doing truly amazing work across our communities. From Edinburgh Interfaith Association breaking down cultural barriers, to Fresh Start Pantry providing low-cost nutritious and healthy food to tackle holiday hunger for vulnerable families during school holidays, to the Edinburgh School Uniform Bank making sure our schoolchildren are properly clothed, I continue to be inspired by the ways in which the Capital's community groups look out for one another in these difficult times. This truly reflects the very best qualities of the individuals who make up our city.

"Unfortunately, we still face major challenges in the areas of poverty, inequality, and social exclusion across the city. The pandemic also cast these into sharp light and made us consider how we could reach and help our citizens in different ways. Now, perhaps more than ever, the OneCity Trust and the organisations it supports are key to supporting our

communities as we move forward. I would encourage anyone reading this to consider the ways that they can contribute whether that be through donations, community benefit partnerships, volunteering or spreading the word of the Trust and its affiliates.

“As Lord Provost my duty is first and foremost to the people of Edinburgh and I am committed to helping them in any way that I am able. I look forward to seeing the OneCity Trust continue its work in the next twenty years and beyond, and it is my sincere hope that we will be able to make a strong and lasting difference for our most vulnerable residents.”

Irvine Welsh, Edinburgh author and Ambassador of the OneCity Trust said: “I’ve been involved with the OneCity Trust for almost two decades. Edinburgh and the wider world have undergone significant changes in this period, resulting in poverty, inequality, and social exclusion becoming even more acute.

“Edinburgh is a city blighted by geographical inequality, great wealth and abject poverty coexisting side by side. This wealth and international acclaim that the city commands does not translate to many communities who have been left behind in an era characterised by public austerity and private profit, and at the expense of key public services. This tale of two cities that is played out not just in Edinburgh but across the country.

“This is obviously something that is in dire need of rebalancing. In the meantime, ventures like the OneCity Trust continue to strive to offer a way for individuals in adverse socioeconomic conditions to find a way to express themselves through arts and culture. This in turn can give them the confidence to articulate their individual needs, those of their communities and consequently inspire them to go about meeting them.

“I am proud to support the OneCity Trust and I hope that in the next twenty years it will continue to inspire people to question the world we find ourselves in, and to take the necessary action to fight poverty, inequality and social exclusion here in the capital of Scotland.”

Sir Ian Rankin, Edinburgh author, and Ambassador of the OneCity Trust said: “It has been an honour as well as a pleasure to have been associated with OneCity Trust for the past twenty years.

“It continues to do valuable work in Edinburgh’s local and underprivileged communities – here’s to the next twenty years!”



OneCity Trust 20th Birthday Reception in City Chambers L-R Patron Irvine Welsh and Lord Provost Robert Aldridge Pic Greg Macvean





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