STC 26

Scotland's Towns Conference 2026
11 November, Adam Smith Theatre, Kirkcaldy

In partnership with

Fife Council

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9am Registration, exhibition, coffee, walking tour

10.00am Conference Welcome — **Auditorium**
Host, Rona Dougall, Broadcast journalist & television presenter

10.05am Ministerial Address — **Auditorium**
Tom Arthur MSP, Minister for Business and Fair Work

10.15am Welcome to Fife — **Auditorium**
Councillor Ross, Leader, Fife Council

10.35am – 11.15am* The Power of Localism: Transforming Fife Towns — **Auditorium**
*Please note, we will pause to respect a 2 minute silence at 11am.

Bringing together perspectives from the public and private sectors and the community, panellists will consider how different sectors can work together to unlock local potential, respond to the challenges facing towns, and create places that are economically vibrant, socially connected and environmentally sustainable. The discussion will focus on what is working, what needs to change, and how collaboration can turn ambition into action.

Hosted by Rona Dougall, panellists are:

- Carol Connolly, Director of Place, Fife Council
- Lauren Brook, Chief Executive, Greener Kirkcaldy
- Colin Miller, Founder and Host, Kirkcaldy Property Network

Use mentimeter to ask a question to the panel: Join in with the Q&A here

11.15am Coffee break — **Upper Foyer and Beveridge Room**

11.35am – 12.25pm Morning Parallel Sessions

★ **Session 1 | From Vision to Delivery: Stories from around Scotland** — **Auditorium**
● **Session 2 | The Power of Local: Growth, wealth and community** — **Beveridge Room**

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11.35am – 12.25pm Morning Parallel Sessions

★ **Session 1 | From Vision to Delivery: Stories from around Scotland** **Auditorium**

Through stories from around Scotland we will hear about how place makers are creating mixed use, sustainable and connected towns. Originating from Japan and roughly meaning “chit chat”, this PechaKucha session is designed to be a fast paced, highly visual and engaging with time for audience Q&A following.

Hosted by Rona Dougall, presentations are as follows:

Setts. Drugs. Rock n' Roll:
Bob Keiller, Co-Founder and David McKeith, Operations Director, Our Union Street
Regeneration is a Verb
David Paton, Chair, ProMo
Thinking Big, Building Small: New homes in a Scottish town centre
John Lancaster, Architect and Associate, Smith Scott Mullan

● **Session 2 | The Power of Local: Growth, wealth and community** **Beveridge Room**

A practical workshop applying a placemaking lens to ensure prosperity, retention of wealth, opportunity and decision making within towns and communities.

Workshop hosts are:

- Neil McInroy, Chair, Economic Development Association Scotland
- Lauren Bennett, Community Wealth Manager, Fife Council

12.25pm Lunch, exhibition, connection, walking tour **The Advantage**

If you have some free time in Kirkcaldy, take a look at the Discover Kirkcaldy self-guided walking tour. Developed by Fife Council and powered by Vicinity, the trail takes you through some of Kirkcaldy’s heritage and regeneration highlights in the town centre.

1.25pm Afternoon Parallel Session (repeated)

● **Session 1 | From Vision to Delivery: Stories from around Scotland** **Auditorium**
★ **Session 2 | The Power of Local: Growth, wealth and community** **Beveridge Room**

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2.20pm – 3pm Beyond Ambition **Auditorium**

This panel session provides representation across the key STP 2026 Manifesto areas and will discuss how we collectively move beyond ambition and what we need, to ensure a long term national commitment to Scotland's towns.

Hosted by Rona Dougall, panellists will include:

- Ishabel Bremner, Executive Chair, SLAED
- David Cowan, Head of Regeneration, Architecture and Place Unit, Scottish Government
- Kirsty Macari, Chair, Architecture and Design Scotland
- Neil McInroy, Chair, Economic Development Association Scotland

3pm – 3.30pm From Local Retail to Urban Vitality: The Caldas da Rainha Experience
How the European Capital of Small Retail 2026 is helping shape a more vibrant, innovative and connected city

Sara Lopes Franco, Project Manager – European Capital of Small Retail 2026 & Caldas da Rainha Commercial District, Municipality of Caldas da Rainha

Discover how Caldas da Rainha, Portugal, is harnessing its 2026 European Capital of Small Retail title to transform and celebrate local retail.

This inspiring session will explore how the city is bringing together policy, innovation, entrepreneurship, digitalisation and community engagement to strengthen its high streets and create a more vibrant, sustainable urban centre.

Hear how Caldas da Rainha is tackling city-centre vacancies, supporting new and established businesses, developing digital infrastructure and embedding circular economy practices, while building partnerships that connect retail with wider ambitions for sustainability and urban vitality.

3.30pm – 3.45pm Q&A **Auditorium**

3.45pm STC26 Reflections **Auditorium**

4pm Drinks reception kindly sponsored by Miconex **Auditorium**

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Business Energy Scotland

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Hammond Associates
Making Empty Space Matter

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