



Youth Group to Discover their Sense of Place

Say the word 'heritage' to a group of teenagers and they'd probably run a mile. But members of the Oasis Youth Group are in for a real treat this week with an interactive photographic workshop and exhibition designed to get them creative with their everyday places and spaces.

Organised by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS) and hosted by Nunton Steadings in Benbecula, the five-day workshop will be centred on the theme of a 'Sense of Place'. Taking archive material from RCAHMS collections as a starting point for discussion and creativity, the group will look at the cultural and historical heritage of the island and consider what it means to them.

Local artist Jon Macleod will lead the group through a creative exploration of their local communities, encouraging participants to identify the places that are particularly significant. Participants will be invited to take photographs and make sketches of their favourite places, as well as drawing on their own memories and experiences.

The group will translate their experiences and discoveries into a piece of art, largely using the photographs taken earlier in the week, to express their unique interpretation of contemporary life in the Western Isles. The resulting piece of artwork will be exhibited at Nunton Steadings on the evening of 19th October.

The workshop forms part of the 'Treasured Places' project, organised by RCAHMS to celebrate 100 years of recording Scotland's built environment. RCAHMS holds some 4.5 million photographs, drawings and manuscripts in their National Collection and seeks to open up this inspiring archive for everyone to enjoy.

Jane Gilchrist, Treasured Places education officer said, 'Using creativity to encourage the public to interact and examine their local heritage is key to the Treasured Places project. A deeper understanding of our built environment helps us to develop a strong sense of identity and deepens our connection with our communities and the wider world'

Several further 'Treasured Places' workshops are taking place across Scotland over the next six months, each being led by an artist or specialist who will lead participants through creative responses to their own built heritage. In the Lothian's for example, retired veterans will come together with a poet to express their thoughts on war

memorials; whilst in Glasgow young people from the Christian, Jewish and Muslim faiths will work together in Inter-Faith Week to use their faith buildings to inspire the creation of a textile art-piece.

Ends

Notes to Editors:

1) There will be two photo opportunities as follows:

- Tuesday 16th October at 10.30am (Meet at Nunton Steadings). Photographers will be able to accompany the Youth Group on the field trip to identify and record their favourite places.

- Friday October 19th between 6pm and 8pm at Nunton Steadings. Exhibition of Work.

Please contact Jane Gilchrist, Treasured Places Education Officer at Nunton Steadings on 01870 603774.

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2) The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS) is currently developing a number of projects to celebrate its centenary year in 2008. The main celebration for the general public is **Treasured Places** a Scotland-wide initiative to engage the public with the heart of the Commission's work and explore the archive collection through a number of exciting initiatives taking place over the next 18 months. The aim of the project is to raise awareness of the man-made environment and to help people recognise the value of their own local heritage.

3) **Treasured Places** is supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, and run by RCAHMS.

4) RCAHMS is the national record of Scotland's built environment, whose mission is to identify, survey and interpret the archaeological, architectural and historical environment of Scotland, to preserve and add to the collection, and to promote public understanding and enjoyment of items in the collection.