

# Creativity, community and connection: Glasgow's historic Citizens Theatre reopens

22/08/2025

Two people in high vis jackets and hard hats explore the restored auditorium.

Improvements have been made to the theatre's facilities, front of house and behind the scenes. Photo: Eoin Carey.

After a seven-year regeneration project, one of the city's most celebrated venues will reopen with a homecoming celebration and a new season of performances.

The category B listed building in the Gorbals opened in 1878, as a variety theatre. Since 1945, it has been home to the Citizens Theatre Company which, over the following decades, built an international reputation at the theatre – known affectionately as the Citz – for productions of both modern and classical works. However, by 2017, the building was in urgent need of refurbishment and modernisation.

Alongside funding from other partners, our grant of £7.2million has contributed to the conservation of the structure and enabled a programme of improvements, including:

- creating new rehearsal and studio spaces
- making the venue fully accessible
- rebuilding backstage and technical facilities
- boosting the building's long-term sustainability

For audiences, a new foyer and better sightlines will improve the experience of seeing a show. The new facilities will also provide the broader Gorbals community with more opportunities to engage with their shared creative heritage and the arts. Previously at-risk heritage has been restored for visitors to explore, including rare 19th-century stage machinery.

A view of the facade of the theatre, with a group of five illuminated caryatids positioned on the room above ne  
The restoration continues a proud history stretching back to 1878. Photo: Mark Liddell.

The team plan to build connections with the community by celebrating this history. A community activity plan will provide new opportunities for people to get involved, by sharing stories about the Theatre, playing a role in creating a digital home for its heritage, and joining a programme of events.

The theatre will celebrate its reopening with a Homecoming Festival, beginning with a community-led procession through the Gorbals on 23 August, followed by a weekend of creative workshops and behind the scenes tours. The festival will continue until 5 September, before a full season of new performances.

Kate Denby, Executive Director of Citizens Theatre, said: "The reopening of the Citizens Theatre marks a hugely significant moment – not just for the building, but for everyone who holds this theatre close to their heart. This homecoming year is a celebration of creativity, community and connection. The Citz has always been a theatre for the people of Glasgow; now, more than ever, we want everyone to feel welcome here."

To find out more about the upcoming programme and the Homecoming Festival, [head to the Citizens Theatre website](#). We're proud to support the restoration of treasured buildings and spaces right across the UK – [explore more projects we're funding](#).

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[A group of four colleagues, holding up a blue Heritage Fund roundel, stand in the middle of the stage of the Leith Theatre Trust. Credit: Lynn Morrison, Anna Higham, Douglas Frost and Aisha Fatunmbi-Randall from Leith Theatre Trust.](#)

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