Derry Cittie & Strabàne Destrìck Cooncil

Ulstèr-Scotch Leid Week

23-27 | Nov | 2026

Further information:
www.derrystrabane.com/ulsterscots



Supported by The Ulster-Scots Agency

@fairfaaye

Fair faa ye!

Join iz fer Ulster-Scots Leid Week 2026

Ulster-Scots baes aa aroun' iz, an' Ulster-Scots Leid Week gies iz an unco chanst tae lairn mair aboot the leid an' tae mairk an' celebrate the inpit at Ulster-Scots maks tae oor city an' airt.

The yeir Derry Cittie an' Strabane Destrick Cooncil ir sarious gled tae offair a week-lang programme o' daeins, whey a wheen o' differ voices amang thaim Ulster-Scots scholars, screeveners, poets, film-makers, singers an' perfoarmers.

Sae gif ye onie hae a wheen o' wurds, uise the hamely tongue ivry day ir gif ye're onie wantin' tae fin oot aboot the Ulster-Scots leid, the yeir's programme haes sim thing fer ivryboadie.

Derry Cittie an' Strabane Destrick Cooncil's programme baes kin'ly hefted bae the Boord o' Ulster-Scotch.

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Fer mair wittens gae tae
www.derrystrabane.com/ulsterscots
fer the latest newins.

Follae iz oan Twitter
@fairfaaye #UlsterScotsLanguageWeek #Leidweek

Aa the events an' daeins in the programme ir free bit beukin baes needfu' fer in-person daeins.

Tae beuk yer place aa onie o' the in-person daeins get oantae ulsterscots@derrystrabane.com
ir teyyphone iz oan (028) 71376 579.

Tak' tent aa the programme micht bae subject tae altheration.

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Fair faa ye!

Join us for Ulster-Scots Language Week 2026

Ulster-Scots is all around us, and Ulster-Scots Language Week provides us with a unique opportunity to learn more about the language and to celebrate the contribution which Ulster-Scots makes to life throughout the city and district.

This year, Derry City and Strabane District Council is delighted to offer a week-long programme of events featuring a diverse range of voices, including Ulster-Scots scholars, writers, poets, film-makers, singers and performers.

So, whether you just have a wheen o words, speak tha hamely tongue daily, or are just curious about the Ulster-Scots language, this year's programme has something for everyone.

Derry City and Strabane District Council's programme is kindly supported by The Ulster-Scots Agency.

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Visit www.derrystrabane.com/ulsterscots for the latest updates.

Follow us on Twitter @fairfaaye
#UlsterScotsLanguageWeek #LeidWeek

All events in the programme are free but booking is essential for in-person events.

To book your place at any of the in-person events please contact ulsterscots@derrystrabane.com or call us on T: (028) 71376 579.

Please note that this programme may be subject to change.

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Lecture Event

‘Ulster-Scots Poetry of the Revolutionary period’

With Dr Jennifer Orr, Newcastle University
Monday 23 November 2026, 1pm
Whittaker Suite, Guildhall, Derry~Londonderry

In the late 1990s Seamus Heaney wrote ‘A Birl for Burns’ in honour of his bardic predecessor. Written in the six line ‘Burns stanza’, Heaney reflects on how words like ‘bummed’, ‘blow’d’ and ‘thol’d’ were already familiar to him, growing up West of the Bann where ‘the tongue the Ulster Scots brought wi’ them, and stick to still in County Antrim was in my ear.’ Heaney’s mastery of the Scottish form, marrying Scots and Gaelic Irish rituals within the poem, acknowledges a mixed linguistic heritage that is much more complex than that of settler and native. Two centuries before Heaney, a group of labouring-class Ulster poets negotiated their own literary voice in dialogue with a Scottish, and wider British, literary tradition, writing some of their best verse in Ulster-Scots. Rediscovered in the twentieth century and named the ‘rhyming weavers’ by John Hewitt, poets like Samuel Thomson and James Orr are now acknowledged as Romantic innovators in their own right, working freehandedly in a bardic tradition for their own Irish subject matter.



Dr Jennifer Orr: Dr Jennifer Orr is Senior Lecturer in Literature at Newcastle University and a graduate of the Universities of Oxford (BA) and Glasgow (PhD). She has published on Irish and Scottish literature and history, with a specialism in the poetry and letter networks of the United Irishmen. Her most recent book ‘Literary Networks and Dissenting Print Culture in Ireland 1790-1815’ is available from Palgrave Macmillan. She is currently writing on the Scottish poet Robert Fergusson (1750-1774) and a longer-term project on the correspondence network of Co. Down United Irishman David Bailie Warden (1772-1845) and his transatlantic letter network as American Consul to Paris.

Admission Free
Light refreshments provided from 12:30pm

To book your place contact:
ulsterscots@derrystrabane.com

Online Language Taster Session

An Introduction to the Ulster-Scots Language

With Dr Dayna Jost, Ulster-Scots Community Network

Wednesday 25 November 2026, 10:00-12:00
Online event hosted on MS Teams

This lively interactive taster session will explore the language's origins, history and cultural importance, while giving participants the opportunity to practise listening, reading and speaking skills. Activities are designed to help learners recognise familiar words and expressions, discover new language patterns, and build confidence in using Ulster-Scots. Whether you have a wheen o wurds or none at all, everyone is welcome.

To sign up and receive your joining link, please email: ulsterscots@derrystrabane.com



Dr Dayna Jost: Dr Dayna Jost is a Development Officer with the Ulster-Scots Community Network. She has been working with various communities in Northern Ireland for the last seven years through her research work in identity and community relations in the education sector. With a doctorate in Education and ten years' experience as a language teacher, she is particularly passionate about providing meaningful educational opportunities for people of all ages and all backgrounds to explore the histories of the Ulster-Scots language and culture and their many contributions to the rest of the world. Originally from Baltimore, Maryland USA, she now lives in Bangor, County Down.

Digital Language Learning Package

Fae a Stairt

With An Gaeláras in collaboration with Robert Campbell

Available online from Monday 23 November 2026 at www.derrystrabane.com/ulsterscots

This comprehensive, multi-modal digital learning package is designed to make the basics of the Ulster-Scots language accessible, engaging and fun. The project consists of short-form video content, a digital e-book, interactive quizzes and games, and an online assessment.

The project aims to promote, develop and increase awareness of the Ulster-Scots language by breaking down barriers to entry and presenting everyday vocabulary through a blend of audio-visuals, reading materials, and interactive testing.

The resources will be showcased in a local Irish-medium school during Leid Week and the learning package will remain hosted online and fully shareable after Leid Week 2026, creating a lasting resource for educators, community groups and the wider public.



Robert Campbell: Robert Campbell's art comes from a deeply personal place, shaped by his own journey with dyslexia and the challenges of the early part of his life. This has given him a passion for creating work that explores life's difficulties in a way everyone can understand, from adults to children.

While storytelling through the spoken word remains his foremost passion, he is also an accomplished poet and fine art illustrator. His work is rooted in and inspired by the Northern Irish landscape and communities. In his writing, Robert explores themes of resilience and overcoming obstacles. For example, in 'Sled Down' (set in and around Derry), children must face their fears to save Christmas. In 'Tales Frae the Life o James Finlay Bruce', the author deals with themes of change and complexity in a subtle way. This drive to connect with and learn from heritage is at the heart of his creativity.

Short Film

The Christmas Café

by Anne McMaster

Available online from Monday 23 November 2026 at www.derrystrabane.com/ulsterscots

As evenings darken and nights grow longer, a small rural café offers light and warmth at a special annual gathering. Locals bring an item as a "gift", each with a short story. This gentle audio narrative unfolds through stories told in Ulster-Scots, sharing treasured memories of rural life: family, the seasons, friendship, community, childhood and the natural world.

Influenced by Sherwood Anderson's novel 'Winesburg, Ohio' (1919) and Edgar Lee Masters' poetry collection 'Spoon River Anthology' (1915), this short film, with its audio narrative and accompanying script, will present a rich and engaging portrayal of rural life with stories of winter storms, snow days, beloved pets, memories of loved ones, and working the land.



Anne McMaster: Anne McMaster is a writer and broadcaster whose poetry, screenplays and drama span English and Ulster-Scots.

The BBC, British-Irish Secretariat, Ulster Orchestra and Live Music Now (NI) have used her Pushcart-nominated poetry. She regularly appears on BBC television and radio.

Short Illustrated Film

A Wheen O' Oul Sayins

with Darren Gibson

Available online from Monday 23 November 2026 at www.derrystrabane.com/ulsterscots

'A Wheen O' Oul Sayins' is an entertaining exploration of the humour, character and expressive richness of traditional Ulster-Scots sayings, idioms and expressions.

Presented and narrated by Ulster-Scots writer and broadcaster Darren Gibson, this short-form video will begin with a brief introduction to traditional sayings and their place in Ulster-Scots language and culture. It will explore how these colourful expressions capture everyday experiences, human quirks and observations on life, often conveying a great depth of meaning and humour with just a few memorable words.

The film will then explore a selection of interesting and amusing Ulster-Scots sayings, explaining their meanings, origins where known, and how they might be used in everyday conversation. Each saying will appear on screen alongside a distinctive, characterful digital illustration, designed to reflect the humour and personality of the expression while providing an engaging visual accompaniment to the narration.



Darren Gibson: Darren Gibson is a writer, broadcaster, actor and poet who grew up on the Ards Peninsula and now lives and works in Derry~Londonderry. His work spans television, radio, film and digital media. He began his career as an Ulster-Scots writer, contributing a regular column to the Belfast News Letter, before moving into radio with stories and features for BBC Radio Ulster's Kist o Wurds.

He went on to write the BBC's first Ulster-Scots television drama, 'Stumpy's Brae', and presented the acclaimed factual entertainment series 'Afeared'. His award-winning short film 'The Magic Spade' has been screened internationally, while more recently he has written and performed in short horror films for BBC iPlayer. He continues to develop creative projects that bring fresh stories and voices to screens both large and small.

Short Film with Original Music

Our Language in Song

with Lisa Dawson

Available online from Monday 23 November 2026 at www.derrystrabane.com/ulsterscots

Trace the remarkable journey of the Ulster Scots people and their language in this engaging short film that combines storytelling, original music and reflections on history, memory and place. From the arrival of Lowland Scots in Ulster and the story of Con O'Neill, to the emergence of a distinct language shaped by centuries of cultural exchange, this short film by songwriter and storyteller Lisa Dawson explores the rich heritage and enduring legacy of Ulster-Scots.

Featuring three original songs written and performed in Ulster Scots, the film brings the language and its history to life through music and storytelling. Along the way, it examines the influence of the Irish language on Ulster-Scots, the impact of the Ulster Plantation, and the various cultural influences that helped shape Ulster-Scots as we know it today.

The film also reflects on the changing status of the language, from its widespread everyday use to its marginalisation in public life and education, exploring how Ulster-Scots evolved into what is often described as 'the hamely tongue', and why its preservation remains important.



This thought-provoking production explores the history and cultural significance of Ulster-Scots, celebrating the language's enduring legacy and its contribution to the shared heritage of the region.

Lisa Dawson: Lisa is a musician, songwriter and storyteller whose work blends traditional Celtic and classical music with folklore and cultural storytelling. A full-time performing musician and music tutor since 2016, she has developed a distinctive musical style, combining classical training with a passion for traditional music and the Ulster-Scots language and creating performances that celebrate Ulster Scots culture and make its language accessible to new audiences. Her career highlights include performing at Carnegie Hall in New York, the BBC Proms and representing Northern Ireland at the Irish Embassy in New York. Her music has also featured on BBC Radio Ulster and BBC One Northern Ireland.

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This information is available upon request in a number of formats including large print, Braille, PDF, audio formats (CD, MP3, DAISY) and minority languages.

For further information on alternative formats please contact
Tel: 028 7125 3253
Email: equality@derrystrabane.com

Further information on Ulster-Scots is available at
www.derrystrabane.com/ulsterscots

For further information

call: 028 71 376 579

or visit: www.derrystrabane.com/ulsterscotsweek

Ulster-Scots Agency
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