

SATURDAY  
27 JUNE  
2026

DISATHAIRNE  
27 ÒGMHIOS  
2026



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

OPENING CEREMONY TO  
MARK THE SEVENTH SESSION

CUIRM FHOSGLAIDH GUS  
AN SEACHDAMH SEISEAN  
A CHOMHARRACHADH



ADDRESS BY HIS MAJESTY THE KING  
TO MARK THE SEVENTH SESSION  
OF THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT  
SATURDAY 27 JUNE 2026

ÒRAID LE A MHÒRACHD AN RÌGH  
GUS AN SEACHDAMH SEISEAN AIG  
PÀRLAMAID NA H-ALBA A CHOMHARRACHADH  
DISATHAIRNE 27 ÒGMHIOS 2026

# INTRODUCTION

It is my great pleasure to welcome Their Majesties The King and Queen to the Opening Ceremony marking the beginning of the Seventh Session of the Scottish Parliament.

The start of a new Parliament is to me all about optimism, hope and a renewal of the purpose that lies behind the Parliament's existence. It is a moment not only to reflect on where we have come from, but to be clear about what lies ahead – serving the people of Scotland with purpose, openness and accountability.

Today is about bringing the people of Scotland along with us at the start of that new chapter.

Our Local Heroes, nominated by Members of this Parliament, represent the very best of Scotland. People whose commitment, effort and quiet leadership strengthen the lives of others. It is a privilege to welcome them here today and to recognise the contribution that they make to the country we represent.

The day is also about recognising and celebrating our diverse culture and heritage, with a poem commissioned by Scotland's national poet, Makar Pàdraig MacAoidh which will be delivered in Gaelic. We also celebrate special anniversaries of two of Scotland's cultural organisations.





The National Youth Choir of Scotland is celebrating its 30th anniversary, and members of the NYCOS Edinburgh Regional Choir and NYCOS BSL Youth Choir will perform Sarah Quartel's *The Beat of a Different Drum*. The National Theatre of Scotland will present *As Others See Us* by Martin O'Connor, incorporating a poem to celebrate their 20th anniversary and an excerpt from their acclaimed production *Through the Shortbread Tin*.

This is a Parliament for all of Scotland. It must be open, accessible and connected to the people it represents, and today's programme reflects that commitment.

I am very pleased that you are able to join us as we mark the beginning of this new Session, and I wish you a very enjoyable day at Holyrood.

**Kenneth Gibson MSP**

Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament

## FACAL-TOISICH

Tha e na thoileachas mòr dhomh fàilte a chur air Am Mòrachdan An Rìgh agus A' Bhanrìgh chun na Cuirn Fosglaidh a tha a' comharrachadh toiseach an t-Seachdaimh Seisein de Phàrlamaid na h-Alba.

Air mo shon-sa dheth, tha toiseach na Pàrlamaid ùire mu dheidhinn soirbh-dhùil, dòchas agus ath-ùrachadh an adhbhair air cùlaibh carson a tha a' Phàrlamaid ann. 'S e àm chan ann a-mhàin a bhith a' smaointinn air cò às a thàinig sinn ach a bhith soilleir air dè tha fa-near dhuinn – a' frithealadh do mhuinntir na h-Alba le adhbhar, le fosgarrachd agus le cunntachalachd.

Tha an-diugh mu dheidhinn toirt muinntir na h-Alba maille rinn aig toiseach na caibideil ùire sin.

Tha na Gaisgich Ionadail againn, air an ainmeachadh le Buill na Pàrlamaid seo, a' riochdachadh rogha na h-Alba. Tha an gealltanais, an oidhirpean agus an ceannardas ciùin a' neartachadh beathannan dhaoine eile. Tha e na urram a bhith a' cur fàilte orra an seo an-diugh agus a bhith ag aithneachadh na tha iadsan a' cur ris an dùthaich a tha sinne a' riochdachadh.

Tha an latha cuideachd mu bhith ag aithneachadh agus a' comharrachadh ar cultair is dualchais eadar-mheasgte: le dàn, air a choimiseanadh bho bhàrd nàiseanta na h-Alba, am Makar Pàdraig MacAoidh, a bhios air a ghabhail sa Ghàidhlig. Tha sinn cuideachd a' comharrachadh ceann-bliadhna sònraichte aig dà bhuidhinn chultarail na h-Alba.

Tha Còisir Òigridh Nàiseanta na h-Alba a' comharrachadh 30 bliadhna, agus mar sin bi buill de Choisir Roinneil Dhùn Èideann agus Coisir BSL na h-Òigridh a' libhrigeadh *The Beat of a Different Drum* le Sarah Quartel. Bidh Tèatar Nàiseanta na h-Alba a' libhrigeadh *As Others See Us* le Martin O'Connor, a tha a' gabhail a-steach dàn mun 20mh ceann-bliadhna aca agus earrann bhon taisbeantas chliùiteach aca *Through The Shortbread Tin*.

'S e seo Pàrlamaid airson Alba air fad. Feumaidh i a bhith fosgailte, ruigsinneach agus ceangailte ris na daoine a tha i a' riochdachadh, agus tha am prògram airson an-diugh a' nochdadh a' ghealltanais sin.

Tha mi glè thoilichte gu bheil sibh comasach a bhith còmhla rinn agus sinn a' comharrachadh toiseach an t-Seisein ùir seo, agus tha mi an dòchas gum bi an latha seo ann an Taigh an Ròid a' còrdadh ribh gu mòr.

**Kenneth Gibson BPA**

Oifigear Riaghlaidh Phàrlamaid na h-Alba

# ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS

ENTRANCE OF MEMBERS OF THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

ENTRANCE OF THE PARTY LEADERS

ENTRANCE OF THEIR MAJESTIES THE KING AND QUEEN

Fanfare for the Opening of Parliament 2026 composed by Sir James MacMillan KT CBE, conducted by John Logan and performed by Royal Conservatoire of Scotland Brass Ensemble

*Please be standing where possible*

The Scottish Parliament's Mace borne by Robert White

Kintyre Pursuivant Extraordinary of Arms accompanied by Zohaib Asif, Young Scot

The Elizabeth Sword borne by Nicholas Devlin, escorted by Joanna Robertson and Beth Riva; Team Scotland Athletes (Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games)

The King's Body Guard for Scotland (Royal Company of Archers)

Carrick Pursuivant of Arms and Marcus Flucker MSYP, Vice-Chair, Scottish Youth Parliament; Unicorn Pursuivant of Arms and Eilidh Morrison MSYP, RNIB Scotland (Haggeye); Ross Herald of Arms and Caitlin Davis, Young People's Sport Panel, sportscotland; Rothesay Herald of Arms and Chloe Sharkey, John Smith Centre Parliamentary Internship Programme; Marchmont Herald of Arms and Bethany Spain, The Young Women's Movement

The Crown of Scotland borne by the Duke of Hamilton and Brandon escorted by the Lord Lyon King of Arms

His Majesty The King escorted by the Presiding Officer Kenneth Gibson MSP followed by Her Majesty The Queen escorted by the Deputy Presiding Officers Clare Adamson MSP and Katy Clark MSP accompanied by the Royal Company of Archers and the Captain-General

The Presiding Officer escorts Their Majesties The King and Queen to their seats

*The assembled company sits when Their Majesties The King and Queen have taken their seats and the fanfare ends.*

# ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS

## WELCOME

The Presiding Officer

## ADDRESS

His Majesty The King

## PERFORMANCE

National Theatre of Scotland present *As Others See Us*, written and directed by Martin O'Connor and performed by members of The Lyceum Youth Theatre

## SONG

*The Beat of a Different Drum*, performed by NYCOS Edinburgh Regional Choir, led by Mark Evans, and NYCOS BSL Youth Choir, led by Paul Whittaker

## RESPONSE TO HIS MAJESTY THE KING

The First Minister

## POEM

*Let This Hall be Full of Noises* written and delivered by Pàdraig MacAoidh,  
The Scots Makar

## SONG

*Ae Fond Kiss*, by Robert Burns, performed by Rachel Groves (clarsach)  
and Ellie Beaton (vocalist)

## DEPARTURE OF HIS MAJESTY THE KING

*Bonnie Dundee and A Hundred Pipers* performed by the Scottish Parliament's Piper  
Stuart McMillan MSP from the Members' Garden

*Guests are asked to stand where possible until the procession leaves the Chamber  
and to remain in their seats until signalled to leave by ushers.*



## THE MAKAR'S POEM

### Gum bi an talla seo làn fhuaimmean

Pàdraig MacAoidh

Gum bi an talla seo làn fhuaimmean a-rithist.  
Seòmar a' toirt mac-talla chan e dha fhèin a-mhàin  
ach dha gach faram na dùthcha, geur agus binn:  
àrd-bheachdan, còmhradh fìor neo-shuarach;  
dòchas agus eachdraidh a' bleedraigeadh  
ri chèile; dùbhlanan air an togail  
gu dealasach nuair a tha iad a dhìth.

Gum bi guthan ann o Arnol 's Auchenrivock,  
Uig, Wick, Wigtown, Yell, Yoker, Zoar,  
gach àite eadarra agus a chòir,  
's ur òraidean fìchte le ruitheaman ur càinain:  
Albais, Gàidhlig, Shaetlan, Shona, Dutch, Arabic,  
Oracadian, Pòlainnis, Fraingis, Hindi, Mandarin –  
co-sheirm gach sanas, fuaimreag, connrag an t-saoghail mhòir.

Gum bi ceilearadh nan eun ann, 's beucail bheathaichean,  
gairm cait-fhiadhaich, comhachaige, guilbnich, stèirneil,  
sgìathalaich chiùin na còinnich agus a' bhlàith:  
an tìr fhèin na cagar, na glugail, na ròmhan  
nach tèid am mùchadh le bùireadh nam fiadh,  
brag a' gheamhraidh ann an geodha, einnsean;  
leig leis an guth as socaire a sheirm gu domhain.

*A' leantainn...*

## Let This Hall be Full of Noises

Peter Mackay

Let this hall be full of noises again.  
A chamber echoing not just with itself  
but all the sweet, sharp sounds of the country.  
Big ideas and ambition. Honest, unpetty  
discussion. Hope and history if not rhyming  
then at least having a good blether.  
What needs challenged being challenged.

Let accents sound here from Arnol and Auchenrivock,  
Uig, Wick, Wigtown, Yell, Yoker, Zoar,  
and everywhere in between and beyond:  
flaucht your speeches with the rhythms of your leids -  
Scots, Gaelic, Doric, Shaetlan, Dutch, Mandarin,  
Orcadian, Polish, Shona, Hindi, French, Arabic –  
all the signs, vowels, consonants of the world intermingling.

Let there be birdsong and animal call,  
wildcat and hoolet, laverock, curlew, arctic tern,  
the quiet flutter of moss and blossom,  
the land itself in all its whispers, gurgles, groans.  
Let them not be drowned out by the stag rut,  
the brag of the winter sea in a geo, the engine;  
let the quietest voices carry the furthest.

*Continued...*

Gum fuaimnich mac-talla o fhaisg air làmh no fhad às  
den òrd a' buailleadh drithlean, piocaid air gual,  
den each agus crann, den chroit agus gàrradh-iarainn,  
sgoil agus ospadal, de chlap na turbaine –  
gach srannan trang an latha-an-diugh agus an-dè.  
Na leig leis an calafònia ur ciosnachadh;  
cùm co-dhiù aon chluas deas son na tha tighinn.

Seinn na seann òrain, ach dèan àite airson cleasan ùra –  
Burns 's Màiri Mhòr mar luchd-an-taighe aig cèilidh  
le Brooke Combe, Hamish Hawk, Eyve, Taaliadh,  
Michael Mullen, Jacob Alon, Young Fathers, Brìghde Chaimbeul.  
Thoir spèis dhan tèatar (coma leat dràma),  
chan e a-mhàin mar bhathar, ghliumh-margaidh, kitsch.  
Tagh faclan an seo a tha susbainteach, ceasnachail.

'S cùm aire air bun-mheatafor Mhiralles,  
gum bi an talla seo mar bhàta, gleusta,  
stòlda am-measg glagais a' phuirt – eòlas  
air tharraing air bòrd, freagairtean ro-shimplidh  
air fhàgail air a' chidhe – deiseil son tarraing gu muir  
airson còig bhliadhna eile, air a stiùireadh on chreag.  
Bidh stoirmean ann; gun tèid sibh tromhpa.

Dhuibh uile san t-seachdamh seisean-sa,  
tuilleadh aghaidhean ùra (a Mhòrachdan) cha mhòr na riamh roimhe,  
's dòch' gum bi cus fuaimean an-seo gus a dh'fhulaing:  
's e an tomhas an uairsin ciod ris a dh'èistean tu.  
Bi faiceallach, glic 's còir, seachnaich luath-bheart:  
lorg faclan a thiomhas, a dhearbhas, a stiùireas  
na bi *fear*t, gabh an strèan, dèan na tha ceart.

And let there be the echoes from far or near  
of hammer on rivet and bolt, pick on coalface,  
of horse and plough, shipyard and croft,  
of school and hospital, the whirr of turbines:  
all that busy noise of past and present.  
But don't let this dirdum overtake you -  
keep at least one ear pricked for whatever's on the way.

Let old songs still be sung but make space for the new.  
Let Burns and Màiri Mhòr host a ceilidh  
with Brooke Combe, Hamish Hawk, Eyve, Taaliadh,  
Michael Mullen, Jacob Alon, Young Fathers, Brighde Chaimbeul:  
may this be a space for theatre, if not *drama*,  
not just as product or kitsch or corporate glue:  
let your words probe, explore, be purposeful.

And heed Miralles's founding metaphor:  
let this hall once again be a righted boat,  
let it fill with the sounds of the quay, hawsers  
of knowledge pulled on board, easy answers chucked back  
to the pier – ready to put to sea for five years,  
steadied and steered calmly off the rocks.  
There will be storms ahead; let them be weathered.

To all of you in this seventh session, more new faces  
and roles (your majesties) than – almost – ever before  
there may be more noises here than you can handle:  
the measure then is what you listen to.  
Tak tent, be wise, kind and open, not recondite:  
find words to clarify, assuage, check and lead;  
don't be feart, bear the weight, do what's right.

## PROGRAMME OF MUSIC AND PERFORMANCE

**Royal Conservatoire Brass** is an ensemble led by John Logan, comprising of senior students from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. The musicians have already built-up considerable experience both as soloists and as orchestral players, working regularly with organisations such as the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Scottish Opera, and Scottish Chamber Orchestra. The ensemble's repertoire is wide-ranging, spanning five centuries in a variety of styles from original works for brass, to arrangements of popular classics and jazz.

French Horn (Emily Morran); Trumpet (Nadia Bedwell, Rona Campbell, Edward McDaid, Bethany Harby); Trombone (Gregor Dowall, Robbie Dowall, Marcella Haldane); Bass Trombone (Lorna Rae); Tuba (Eleanor Gaskell)

**The National Youth Choir of Scotland** is the country's largest youth singing organisation, founded in 1996 by Christopher Bell, and celebrating their 30th Anniversary. It nurtures generations of Scottish vocal talent, providing top-tier training and performance opportunities for children and young adults from infancy up to age 25 through a network of national and regional choirs.

Logan Adam, Poppy Davidson-Kelly, Nesta Deeken, Aliyah Faulds, Alana Guerra Hardie, Lila Guerra Hardie, Ellie Hartnup-Spiers, Seren Holmes, Roisin Horseman, Maddie Kitchen, Ellie Lockerbie, Kameron Lukina, Katie MacDonald, Beth McGauley, Eva Morrison, Isla Morrison, Isla O'Donnell, Norah Oosterhoff, Clara Provart, Serafina Ramos, Ananyaa Sinah, Lola Belle Wilkie, Catherine Wu

**The National Theatre of Scotland** is Scotland's pioneering "theatre without walls". Established in 2006, and celebrating their 20th Anniversary, it has no permanent venue; instead, the company collaborates with artists to stage hundreds of dynamic, globally acclaimed productions in conventional theatres, village halls, schools, and site-specific locations like airports, forests, and ferries.

Shane Barker, Beatrice Bate, Alex Briggs, Thomas Candlin, Naiara Killen Quinan

**The National Youth Pipe Band of Scotland** is a premier, non-competing performance organisation for young pipers and drummers aged 10 to 25. Designed to complement local bands, the initiative brings together talented musicians from across the country to master ambitious concert repertoire, develop their leadership skills, and perform at iconic venues like the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall.

Pipes (Cailean Acamovic, Nyree Howes); Snare drums (Callum Cameron, Nathan Paul)

Ellie Beaton, BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year 2025, and Rachel Groves, BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year 2026, perform *Ae Fond Kiss*.

Stuart McMillan MSP has been a Member of the Scottish Parliament since 2007 and currently represents the constituency of Inverclyde. Since 2012, as parliamentary piper, Stuart has performed at many parliamentary events including the 25th Anniversary of the Scottish Parliament, the Opening Ceremonies in 2016 and 2021 and annually at the Presiding Officer's Burns Supper for Scotland's Consular Corps.

## LOCAL HEROES 2026

Members of the Scottish Parliament were invited to nominate a person in their constituency or region for the extraordinary contribution they have made to their community to be recognised as part of the Opening Ceremony.

**Muhanad Al Jama** Edinburgh and Lothians East Region 🌀 **Bob Alston** Glasgow Kelvin and Maryhill 🌀 **Ian Archibald** Kirkcaldy 🌀 **Emma Armstrong** West Scotland Region 🌀 **Jakob Assarsson** Edinburgh Central 🌀 **Asif Bashir** Midlothian North 🌀 **Polly Beck** West Scotland Region 🌀 **William Beckett** Glasgow Region 🌀 **Janine Boyle** Uddingston and Bellshill 🌀 **Norrie Brown** Cunninghame North 🌀 **Georgeta Buzgaru** Mid Scotland and Fife Region 🌀 **Ewen Cameron** North East Scotland Region 🌀 **Megan Cassidy** Coatbridge and Chryston 🌀 **Rahela Cirpaci** Glasgow Southside 🌀 **Ronnie Collins** Dunfermline 🌀 **Gregor Corse** Orkney Islands 🌀 **Denis Coyne** Mid Scotland and Fife Region 🌀 **Diane Currie** Highlands and Islands Region 🌀 **Sharon Deyell** Shetland Islands 🌀 **David Dorward** North East Scotland Region 🌀 **James Dunbar** Inverness and Nairn 🌀 **Sara El-Awaisi** Edinburgh and Lothians East Region 🌀 **Craig Ferguson** Paisley 🌀 **Nicola Ferguson** South Scotland Region 🌀 **Cameron Findlay** North East Scotland Region 🌀 **Claire Forsyth** Glasgow Region 🌀 **Richard Franklin** Highlands and Islands Region 🌀 **Richard Gargaro** Edinburgh Southern 🌀 **Gwilym Gibbons** South Scotland Region 🌀 **Lorraine Gillies** Almond Valley 🌀 **Adam Gillies** Falkirk East and Linlithgow 🌀 **Frances Gilmour** West Scotland Region 🌀 **Andrew Girvan** Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley 🌀 **Morag Goulden** Edinburgh North Western 🌀 **James Haig** North East Scotland Region 🌀

Claire Hamilton Highlands and Islands Region 🌀 Hilary Harris Glasgow Region 🌀  
Pearl Hastie Falkirk West 🌀 Emma Henderson Highlands and Islands Region 🌀  
Millie Henderson Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch 🌀 Heather Henry Dundee City  
West 🌀 Les Hoey Motherwell and Wishaw 🌀 Yvette Hoskins North East Scotland  
Region 🌀 Archie Hume Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire 🌀 Ronnie Johnstone  
Dumfriesshire 🌀 Debbie Jupp Central Scotland and Lothians West Region 🌀  
Karolina Juszczuk Clackmannanshire and Dunblane 🌀 Kathleen Kaye Galloway and  
West Dumfries 🌀 Sara Kemp Edinburgh and Lothians East Region 🌀 Angus Knox  
Clydesdale 🌀 Isobel Law West Scotland Region 🌀 David Lawman Angus North and  
Mearns 🌀 Susan Lindner-Kelly Rutherglen and Cambuslang 🌀 Tom Logan East  
Lothian Coast and Lammermuirs 🌀 Stanley Lovatt West Scotland Region 🌀  
David MacDonald Caithness, Sutherland and Ross 🌀 George Macleod Na h-Eileanan  
an Iar 🌀 Brie McCann Glasgow Region 🌀 Ruby McDonald Mid Scotland and Fife  
Region 🌀 John McNally Edinburgh and Lothians East Region 🌀 Avril McNeill Mid  
Fife and Glenrothes 🌀 Roseanna McPhee Mid Scotland and Fife Region 🌀 Maggie  
Morrison Renfrewshire North and Cardonald 🌀 Anne Morton Cowdenbeath 🌀  
Scott Muir Central Scotland and Lothians West Region 🌀 Margaret Munro South  
Scotland Region 🌀 Bruce Newlands Inverclyde 🌀 Tony O'Brien Eastwood 🌀

**Patrick O'Meara** South Scotland Region 🌀 **Libby Ong** South Scotland Region 🌀  
**Hazel Orr** Bathgate 🌀 **Kevin Osborne** Dumbarton 🌀 **Sachin Patel** Glasgow  
Baillieston and Shettleston 🌀 **Terry Paterson** Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse 🌀  
**Lisa Petrie** Edinburgh North Eastern and Leith 🌀 **Carol Ramsay** Central Scotland  
and Lothians West Region 🌀 **Derek Reid** Glasgow Cathcart and Pollok 🌀 **Val Reid**  
Edinburgh South Western 🌀 **Carolyn Samson** Edinburgh Northern 🌀 **Christine**  
**Sayer** Clydebank and Milngavie 🌀 **Alan Skedzielewski** Strathkelvin and Bearsden 🌀  
**Stella Small** Glasgow Region 🌀 **Catriona Smith** Perthshire South and Kinross-shire  
🌀 **Sharon Smith** Edinburgh and Lothians East Region 🌀 **Vicci Stein** Glasgow  
Region 🌀 **Eleanor Stevenson** Argyll and Bute 🌀 **Christine Stewart** South Scotland  
Region 🌀 **Alan Stewart** Glasgow Region 🌀 **Susan Temple** Renfrewshire West and  
Levern Valley 🌀 **Gordon Thomson** North East Scotland Region 🌀 **Richard Tough**  
Fife North East 🌀 **Fabio Villani** Highlands and Islands Region 🌀 **Catherine Walker**  
Perthshire North 🌀 **Karen Watson** Ayr 🌀 **Shona Watson** Banffshire and Buchan  
Coast 🌀 **Lorraine Wilkinson** Mid Scotland and Fife Region 🌀 **Lindsey Wilson** Angus  
South 🌀 **Ellen Wright** Glasgow Anniesland



## SPECIAL THANKS TO

The young people who formed the Guard of Honour for the arrival of the Crown of Scotland and Elizabeth Sword and for the departure of Their Majesties The King and Queen from the following youth organisations:

Girlguiding Scotland © John Smith Centre © RNIB Scotland (Haggeye) © Scottish Youth Parliament © Scouts Scotland © Sportscotland © The Boys' Brigade © The Girls' Brigade in Scotland © The Young Women's Movement © Young Scot

BBC Archive for their assistance in providing archive footage



