

We, the Scottish people, undertake

To find within our culture a true measure
Of the mind's vitality and spirit's health;
To see that what is best in us is treasured,
And what is treasured, held as common wealth;

To guarantee all Scots folk, of whatever
Age or origin, estate or creed,
The means and the occasion to discover
Their unique gift, and let it flower and seed;

To act as democratic overseer
Of our whole culture: wise conservator
Of its tradition, its future's engineer,
The only engine of its living hour;

To take just pride in all in our diverse tongues,
Folks and customs - and also what is yet
Most distinct in us: our infinite songs,
Our profligate invention and thraven debate;

To honour our best artists, and respect
Not just the plain cost of their undertaking
But the worth of what they make, and every act
Of service and midwifery to that making;

And to discover, through our artistry
And fine appreciation of our art,
What we are not - so know ourselves to be
The world, both in microcosm and part,

And recognise in this our charge of care
To friend and stranger, bird and beast and tree,
To the planetary and local space we share.
We will do this wakefully, and imaginatively.

Don Paterson, 2005