



December 2016

A 2050 vision for Edinburgh



It's easy to make a New Year's Resolution for 2017, but what about 2050?

Our conversation with residents and businesses of Edinburgh, along with those who visit, on the type of city they want Edinburgh to be by 2050 is now full steam ahead and clear themes and shared priorities are starting to emerge.

From preserving Edinburgh's green spaces to blending new architecture with the city's distinctive Old and New Towns, you have been telling us what matters to you.

The response to this conversation to date has been fantastic and I would like to thank everyone who has taken the time to engage.

In the New Year, we will be preparing a citywide vision for the Edinburgh of the future and we want you to continue giving your input. Let us know what you think at edinburgh.org/2050.

Reasons to be cheerful

There's been some very welcome news about Edinburgh's continued economic resilience in recent weeks.

[Hotel industry research](#) showed that in contrast to other cities, Edinburgh's hotels saw a record profit growth in October thanks to a surge in international visitors. Profit per room was up 18.4% during the month of October.

Meanwhile, retail sales and leisure spend both climbed in October, according to figures issued by Essential Edinburgh in their monthly [Essential Trends bulletin](#). Retail sales jumped 6.9% compared with the same month in 2015, and leisure spend increased by 5%.

And October saw well over a million passengers travel through Edinburgh Airport – making it the busiest October *EVER* at a Scottish airport.

Festive free wifi

When you are out and about enjoying the festivities in the city centre, remember to take advantage of free high speed wifi.

More than 50,000 people are already using the EdiFreeWiFi service, which is now in place following a 10-year concession contract with [intechnologyWiFi](#), agreed in March this year, to deliver wifi coverage and improved mobile reception in the city centre.

You'll also be able to make the most of the free service at Edinburgh's Hogmanay as [intechnologyWiFi](#) is their official partner and has installed extra equipment to cope with increased demand.

Here's a [map of the available coverage and FAQs](#) about the EdiFreeWiFi service.

Keeping to our pledges

It's fair to say that politicians often make ambitious promises when canvassing for votes but how often do they voluntarily put their commitments up for public examination?

On taking office in May 2012, we set out 53 specific pledges that we aimed to deliver by 2017 – the progress of which has been constantly and independently monitored by officers throughout our term.

These are based on a number of high level commitments, which include reducing poverty, inequality and deprivation, and maintaining and improving the quality of life in Edinburgh.

I am pleased to report that, thanks to recent developments such as the opening of the new Portobello High School, we have now met 39 of the pledges with the remaining 14 on track to be completed by next May.

Fantastic books and where to find them

Edinburgh is widely thought of as the birthplace of Harry Potter so we are delighted to showcase an original copy of J.K. Rowling's classic, Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone.

Featuring personal anecdotes and illustrations by the author, this one-of-a-kind book is a must-see for all Potter fans and brings a touch of magic to our Writers' Museum this winter.

[Visit](#) before 8 January and check out our series of family friendly events taking place.

20mph rollout continues

We're now four months into Edinburgh's 18-month journey towards becoming a 20mph city, after Phase 1 went live in the city centre and rural west Edinburgh on 31 July.

This carefully planned rollout is about keeping speeds down in residential and shopping streets, while retaining a strategic network of key routes across the Capital at 30 and 40mph.

[Signs and lines](#) are now beginning to be put in across Zones 2 (North) and 3 (South Central / East), with the 20mph limit formally coming into effect for Phase 2 on 28 February 2017.

Check out an interactive map of the [20mph network and implementation timetable](#) on our website and find out when 20mph is coming to your area.

Season's Greetings

The celebrations for Edinburgh's Christmas are well underway and the city is once again gearing up for three spectacular days of Hogmanay celebrations.

I am glad to say the city's school pupils have been at the heart of the festivities this year, with 10,000 children benefitting from free visits to the circular ice rink in St Andrew Square. Bus shelters in the city centre are proudly displaying some of our school pupils' [creative Christmas card designs](#), while Princes Street Gardens has been adorned with '[Winter Windows](#)' by budding young artists from local schools.

Adding some festive cheer to your TV screens, our talented schools choirs will also be performing on STV for Edinburgh's Christmas Song Book. I can't think of a better way to get in to the spirit of things.

Merry Christmas from me and all the very best for 2017.

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