

Latest News

Culture and Communities Committee
10.00am, Thursday 5 October 2023



Fireworks Control Zones (Wards Affected – All)

The Scottish Government has published "[Firework Control Zones: Guidance for Local Authorities](#)" in relation to the Fireworks and Pyrotechnic Articles (Scotland) Act 2022.

A firework control zone (FCZ) is an area within a local authority's boundary in which it is a criminal offence for a member of the public to ignite a firework, including on private property such as a garden. Public firework displays will continue to be permitted within an area designated as a firework control zone, subject to certain requirements.

Unfortunately, due to the timing of the guidance and the anticipated minimum four to six month timescales involved, it will not be possible to implement any FCZs for this year's Bonfire night.

However, Police Scotland will still implement and enforce the Dispersal Zones across the city this year.

The Scottish Government are holding a series of online events in partnership with the Scottish Community Safety Network for Scottish Local Authorities throughout September specifically on:

- Issues that a FCZ could address and how an application could be prompted;
- How consultation on whether to designate a FCZ could be triggered;
- Consultations on FCZs and best practice; and
- Raising awareness of FCZs.

Following these sessions, officers will develop a process for the implementation of FCZs in Edinburgh.

Committee is asked to note that the new personal licensing system has been delayed until 2024 at the earliest. Once this is in place, the Council's Regulatory Services team will have joint enforcement responsibility for the new licensing system with Police Scotland. An update will be provided to Committee on this once details of implementation arrangements are available.

Customs House Update (Wards Affected – 13 Leith)

At its meeting of [13 December 2022](#), Committee approved the recommendations made for development of Custom House by the Scottish Historic Buildings Trust (SHBT), including the proposal that the Council's Museums and Galleries Service work jointly with the Trust to develop the heritage element of the project and support plans for further community engagement to explore options for a sustainable interpretative approach. To define roles and responsibilities of each party, a draft partnership agreement was drawn up and shared with the SHBT, and a follow up meeting to discuss this in detail has been arranged. Due to resignations of key staff both in Museums and the Trust, this work will take longer than anticipated and a further update will be provided after meeting with SHBT.

Nelson Monument – Project Update (Wards Affected – 11 City Centre)

The design team have now been appointed to address the issues of damage to the timber structure that supports the Time Ball mechanism as well as water ingress at the Nelson Monument.

The next stages are:

- Appointment of accredited timber specialist with suitable knowledge and experience to assess the state of decay and produce a report. Advice is being taken from Historic Environment Scotland to identify specialist with suitable facilities, with the expectation that it is unlikely these specialist firm(s) will be on a Council framework. This could prolong the procurement process.
- A site visit by the Cumbria Clock Company to assess the mechanism and assist with preparing a detailed method statement on the removal of the mechanism. It is envisaged that the mechanism and timber crucifix will be removed off-site and either repaired or re-created, brought back to site and re-erected.

Prior to commencing any works, historic building approval will be required (this can take around three months) as well as formal engagement of the appropriate conservation specialists.

Initial feedback from the structural engineer is that the visitor gallery directly below the top most level should remain closed until the timber structure is removed for repair. Access would again be restricted while the structure is being reinstated.

From initial site investigations, the project is estimated to cost between £400,000 and £500,000 (against a budget of c. £63,000). If the funding is agreed, then Spring 2024 is likely to be the earliest full re-opening of the monument.

UNESCO International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition (Wards Affected – All)

An inaugural civic reception to recognise the UNESCO International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition was held at the City Chambers on 23 August 2023.

The event, hosted by the Lord Provost Robert Aldridge and Council Leader Cammy Day, also officially launched the work of [the Edinburgh Slavery and Colonialism Review Implementation Group \(ESCLRIG\)](#) chaired by Irene Mosota. The reception (attended by around 90 representatives of the arts, business, and education sectors as well as diplomatic, heritage and community organisations) provided a space to remember the victims of the transatlantic slave trade and colonialism, time to reflect on its legacy in Edinburgh, and honour those figures who fought for its abolition.

The reception opened with speeches from distinguished guests before the screening of 'Sugar for Your Tea', a short film from Edinburgh's own Kayus Bankole from the Mercury Prize winning group Young Fathers. This was followed by moments for reflection and group discussions on key issues.

In 2020 Edinburgh agreed to address historic racial injustice and stem modern day discrimination by holding an independent review into the city's historical links with slavery and colonialism. In October 2022, [the Lord Provost Robert Aldridge opened the Council meeting by apologising on behalf of the city](#) for its past role in sustaining slavery and colonialism. The civic apology follows the [ten recommendations](#) returned by the Group and an action plan made by the ESCLRIG.



Motion by Councillor Biagi – Eurovision 2023 Bid – Update (Wards Affected – All)

On 15 December 2022, the Council [approved](#) an adjusted motion by Councillor Biagi which recognised that, despite being a major international city of culture, the city has a fundamental weakness in not having an indoor arena of sufficient size to accommodate major events.

As previously advised, there are two potential arena operators looking at investing in Edinburgh and officers have continued to engage with these parties and to offer assistance. It was anticipated that a report would be presented to this Committee as the arena operators would have made public announcements about their plans. At this stage that has still not happened although it is understood that a planning application will soon be submitted for one of the potential locations.

A report will be provided to Committee once more information is available.

Montgomery Street – Helter Skelter (Wards Affected – 12, Leith Walk)

The Helter Skelter was independently inspected on 30 August 2023 and the outcome of this was discussed with stakeholders on 13 September 2023. The independent inspection suggests that refurbishment would not bring the Helter Skelter into line with current safety standards. The Helter Skelter will remain closed while guidance is sought from the Council's insurance team on the outcome of the inspection.

If the Helter Skelter cannot be brought back into use, alternative options are being considered. At this stage, the cost of a replacement which conforms to current safety standards is estimated to be between £50,000 and £80,000.

A further update will be included in the next play parks investment report.

Bowling Greens (Wards Affected – 4, Forth and 6, Corstorphine/Murrayfield)

Contact has been made with local Councillors, Corstorphine Community Council, Corstorphine Trust and the Friends of Victoria Park to highlight that the Council will be running a public consultation on the future of Victoria Park and St Margaret's Park bowling greens and pavilions. This will include discussion with the Stakeholders in October 2023 and officers will seek their views on the best way to open up the consultation to the wider public. It is anticipated that the consultation will be launched before the end of the year.

Summer Festivals 2023 (Wards Affected – All)

2023 has seen a successful summer Festivals season. Initial feedback shows that the programme and audience experience has been strong, and there has been a more celebratory mood across artists, organisers and audiences from home and abroad.

Some highlights from individual festivals are listed below:

Edinburgh Festival Fringe:

- Maintaining strongly international offering with work from 67 countries – alongside nearly 1000 shows, over a quarter of the total, coming from Scotland;
- High levels of industry interest, with over 2000 professional and media delegates;
- 2,445,609 tickets issued – up 11% from 2022; and
- 48% of attendees from Scotland (33% from Edinburgh), 42% from the rest of UK, and 10% from overseas.

Edinburgh International Festival:

- 2,500 remarkable and diverse artists representing 50 nations offered an in-depth and high-quality live experience;

- 120,000 audience and over 32,000 free and discounted tickets issued; and
- 69% of bookers from Scotland, 18% from rest of UK, and 13% international.

Edinburgh International Book Festival:

- 10% increase in the uptake of available tickets;
- Online audiences from over 65 countries; and
- Sales at the Waterstones onsite festival bookshop were more than their two flagship Edinburgh stores combined.

Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo:

- Over 800 international performers engaging over 200,000 audience members, with only a handful of tickets unsold across the run;
- New brand proposition, Performance in a New Light, dazzled audiences with performances ranging from Highland dance, fire breathing, to marches performed to tunes from contemporary video games, all underpinned with strong military heritage and precision; and
- Enhanced offering included new hospitality experiences, and support from official supporters including Presenting Partner, Innis & Gunn.

Edinburgh Art Festival:

- 55 ambitious exhibitions and events across the city, in partnership with 35 of the city's visual art community and a wide range of partners and venues, including sold out series of festival-led commissioned performances and events;
- Shorter 17-day festival spanning three weekends, instead of a month-long programme, attracted over 125,000 attendances in total – a daily average attendance up by 17% compared to 2022 although total numbers reduced due to the change in festival dates; and
- 400 artists from across Europe, Asia, Australia and Oceania, Africa, North America took part in this year's edition, including over 100 based in Scotland.

Edinburgh International Film Festival @ EIF:

- Kept the flame of independent cinema burning bright with 94 events over six days, including 24 new feature films and three talent development events;
- 71% of cinema screenings sold out with an overall cinema occupancy of 82%, adding up to a total in-person attendance of 10,277; and
- In July, film producer [Andrew MacDonald](#) was appointed as the new Chair of Edinburgh International Film Festival, to lead the formation of a new organisation that will deliver EIFF from 2024.

A report on the Summer Festivals will be submitted to the meeting of Culture and Communities Committee in February 2024.

Response to motion by Councillor Faccenda – Toilet Provision (Wards Affected - All)

On 22 June 2023, the Council approved an adjusted motion by Councillor Faccenda on Toilet Provision. An update was included in the [Business Bulletin](#) for Committee on 10 August 2023.

The motion requested an update on the reopening of the public toilets at Nicolson Square. Officers have been liaising with Police Scotland, who have expressed significant concerns around any plan to re-open the toilet facilities. They have highlighted that the toilets being open exacerbates anti-social behaviour and can result in additional criminality. Officers have also been working closely with the Friends of Nicolson Square, who have also expressed concerns about the reopening of the toilets.

The motion also requested information on the Council's public conveniences which have wheelchair access and these are listed below:

Permanent Toilets

Bath Street (male and female)	Pipe Street (unisex)
Taylor Gardens (unisex)	Hamilton Place (unisex)
Saughton Park	Bruntsfield Links (unisex)
Princes Street Gardens – West End (unisex)	Ross Bandstand (unisex)
Castle Terrace Car Park (unisex)	Hope Park (unisex)
South Queensferry High Street (unisex)	Colinton Road (unisex)
Hermitage (female)	Lauriston Castle

Seasonal Temporary Toilets

- Leith Links
- The Meadows
- Inverleith Park

Physical Activity and Sports Strategy Update (Wards Affected – All)

The development of a new Physical Activity and Sport Strategy continues with progression of the pre-consultation phase of the project. A workshop with Committee members took place on the 11 August, with officers presenting on the current direction of travel. Feedback from the discussion has been captured and will be used to shape the development of the draft Strategy.

The approach for the new strategy is based on Public Health Scotland's report titled – [A systems based approach to physical activity in Scotland](#) which focuses on eight themes to increase

population levels of physical activity. Pre-consultation work with Council departments, key stakeholders and equality groups will continue over the course of the next few months with full consultation scheduled to take place in the New Year. A high level timeline for the delivery of the work will be shared with members by the end of October 2023.

Lawn Tennis Association Investment in Park Tennis Courts (Wards Affected – 4 Forth, 5 Inverleith, 6 Corstorphine/Murrayfield and 13 Leith)

On 14 September 2023, Councillor Val Walker, Convener of Culture and Communities Committee, officially opened the refurbished tennis courts at Leith Links and was joined by pupils from Leith Primary School to celebrate the occasion. Tennis courts at Inverleith Park, St Margaret's Park, Victoria Park and Leith Links received total investment of £190,000. The Council contributed funds £33,000 with the remaining £157,000 coming from the UK Government and LTA Tennis Foundation grant.

The courts have undergone extensive work to ensure viability for years to come, including resurfacing, repainting, new fencing, and a new gate system. This nationwide programme of investment is seeing thousands of existing park tennis courts in poor or unplayable condition brought back to life for the benefit of communities across the country, providing vital opportunities for children and adults to get active.

Councillor Walker also officially launched the new [ClubSpark booking system](#) for the four tennis court sites which went live on Friday 15 September. The public can now book courts through the online system at a cost of £1 per booking.



Filmhouse Update (Wards Affected – All)

A fundraising campaign is underway to re-open Edinburgh's Filmhouse, a well-loved cinema known for presenting one of the most ambitious and diverse cinema programmes in the UK. The ambition is for Filmhouse to open its doors once again in 2024.

Newly formed charity Filmhouse (Edinburgh) Ltd. and Caledonian Heritable have agreed an interim lease to enable a period of fundraising for essential refurbishment works to the cinemas and public areas. Caledonian Heritable, who acquired the building in early 2023, are currently undertaking a

programme of upgrades to the fabric and will gift all projection equipment to the new Filmhouse, including the customised analogue 35mm and 70mm projectors.

As a key step, a major fundraising campaign was launched on 14 September by Filmhouse (Edinburgh). Once they have raised sufficient funds to refurbish the cinema, they will enter a 21-year lease with Caledonian Heritable, operating once again as an independent cinema venue celebrating the diversity of filmmaking worldwide.

Local Cinema Community Cinema Programme (Wards Affected - All)

Seven community cinema hubs across Edinburgh have announced a programme of screenings which include multiple screenings of Ken Loach's upcoming (and reputedly last) feature film *The Old Oak*. The Local Cinema film programme includes BAFTA winning Scottish film *Limbo* by Ben Sharrock, 80s classic *Local Hero* in its 40th anniversary year, short films by renowned Scottish filmmaker Margaret Tait, food and film screenings for young people and their families at WHALE Arts, Scottish Documentary Institute-produced *Seven Songs for a Long Life* followed by *Death Café*, and *Tish*, filmmaker Paul Sng's latest moving portrait of social documentary photographer Tish Murtha.

The Local Cinema film programme has been funded by the City of Edinburgh Council via the Creative Community Hubs Network, which brings together eight building-based hubs who are engaging with their local communities in creative ways across Edinburgh. This is the first shared creative programme produced by the hubs network to date, in a pilot project entitled the Community Cinema Hubs Project that is hoped will be extended more widely across Edinburgh into the future.

The programme contains strong themes, including Scottish film; the experiences of LGBTQ+ people and refugees; films for young people; and documentary films exploring working-class lives. All of the films in the programme have been developed with local people and groups involved with each hub.

The Hubs can be found at the following locations:

- The Crannie Community Hub, Old Town;
- Craigmillar Now, Craigmillar;
- Duncan Place Community Hub, Leith;
- Granton:hub, Granton;
- McDonald Road Library, Leith;
- The Out of the Blue Drill Hall, Leith; and
- WHALE Arts, Wester Hailes.

Operation Sceptre (Wards Affected - All)

The costs for the Council of Operation Sceptre have now been finalised, with the total cost being circa £0.107m. This information has been submitted to the Scottish Government with a request to recover these costs as far as possible. Committee will be updated on the outcome of this once known.

Launch of Lend and Mend at Wester Hailes Library (Wards Affected – All)

Wester Hailes Library recently held the national Launch of Lend and Mend, a pioneering pilot project led by the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) to establish a Lend and Mend Hub in nine selected public libraries across Scotland.

The launch marked the opening of the hubs across the country, and featured pop ups from local organisation, the Repair Café, and a citywide sewing network alongside speeches from the Council Leader, the Chief Executive of SLIC and a representative from John Lewis as funders of the project. Funded by the John Lewis 'Circular Future Fund', Lend and Mend in Libraries is one of four projects to successfully win funding from the £1million Fund – raised from the carrier bag levy. The project will offer free access to equipment such as sewing machines and other tools to support local people to keep items in use longer, rather than throwing them away, helping with sustainability and contributing to the circular economy.

As part of the development of the space, the Council is working with local and citywide partners (such as the Edinburgh Remakery, Edinburgh College and Edinburgh Tool Library) to create a programme where local residents, including young people, can learn new skills and feel comfortable accessing the space in their own time too.



Culture and Communities Committee



Convener

Councillor Val Walker

Members

Councillor Walker (*Convener*)

Councillor Cameron

Councillor Glasgow

Councillor Heap

Councillor McFarlane

Councillor McNeese-Mechan

Councillor Mitchell

Councillor Munro

Councillor Osler

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Upcoming Exhibitions and Events

Black History Month 2023 Programme (Wards Affected – All)

Annually Museums and Galleries Edinburgh work in partnership with CRER (The Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights) to host Edinburgh based lectures to mark Black History Month.

CRER has co-ordinated a uniquely Scottish Black History Month during October since 2001. This encompasses the history of African, Caribbean and Asian people in this country; people who often have a direct link with Scotland through slavery, colonialism and migration. Black History Month focuses on people whose sacrifices, contributions and achievements against a backdrop of racism, inequality and injustice are often forgotten about.

CRER strive to work with a range of partners from across the community, voluntary and public sectors and has helped to collaboratively create a Black History Month Programme that includes an exciting range of events from talks, concerts, workshops, film screenings, exhibitions and more.

Link to events – [here](#).

Winter Programmes at City Art Centre, Lauriston Castle and Museum of Edinburgh (Wards Affected – All)

There is a full programme of events at our museums over the winter and into the new year – link [here](#) to see what is available. Many events are linked to exhibitions taking place in our venues, for example Shifting Vistas and Deep Rooted, and Windrush Legacies. There is also a schools programme planned for the City Art Centre, welcoming schools from the north and west of the city.

The Scottish Landscape Awards Exhibition: 4 November 2023 – 3 March 2024 (Wards Affected – All)

This winter the City Art Centre is proud to host the inaugural Scottish Landscape Awards exhibition – Scotland's newest and biggest prize for contemporary landscape art. Including a £10,000 first prize, The Lapecca Scottish Landscape Award, the awards are open to anyone over the age of 16 years, born, living or studying in Scotland, regardless of experience. The awards also include The City of Edinburgh Award, donated by the City of Edinburgh, for works in any medium depicting the Edinburgh landscape. The winning work will become part of the City of Edinburgh collection.

Influential artworld figures Barbara Rae CBE RA RSA RSW (chair), David Mach RA HRSA, Jane and Louise Wilson RA, Ade Adesina RSA and Marian Leven RSA have selected 132 artworks from 2,800 entries. The chosen works reflect all dimensions of natural and man-made environments including works that are imaginary, surreal, abstract, documentary, ecological and realistic across a wide range of media – from painting, sculpture, drawing and miniatures, to film, animation,

audioscapes, and virtual reality. Occupying two floors of the gallery, the exhibition promises to redefine the boundaries of contemporary landscape art.

The exhibition is accompanied by an exciting events programme. For further information please visit our website – [here](#).



Left: Robbie Bushe, Towards St James and Calton Hill (reimagining the Civic Survey and Plan for the City and Royal Burgh of Edinburgh), Painting.



Right: Kiera Walsh, Descendants of L.U.C.A, Sculpture (artist under 25 years).

Usher Hall (Wards Affected: All)

Details of the upcoming events at the Usher Hall can be found here - <https://www.usherhall.co.uk/whats-on>.

Assembly Rooms (Wards Affected: All)

Details of upcoming events at the Assembly Rooms can be found here - <https://www.assemblyroomsedinburgh.co.uk/whats-on>

Church Hill Theatre (Wards Affected: All)

Details of upcoming events at the Church Hill Theatre can be found here - <https://churchhilltheatre.co.uk/whats-on>:

Recent Events and Activities

Travelling Gallery (Wards Affected – All)

The Travelling Gallery has completed its second tour of the year. Launching on the iconic Calton Hill the exhibition toured across Scotland finishing back in Edinburgh as part of the Art Festival, stopping at Leith Library and Theatre, WHALE Arts and The Ripple.

With funding from the Henry Moore Foundation, the Summer exhibition, *High on the Summit Ridge* by collaborative duo Gabecare, explored the unpaid labour that goes into housework. Gabecare drew our attention to who carries out the care and maintenance at home (tidying is a task that is noticed when it's not done but unnoticed when it's done) while at the same time managing to embrace and even celebrate the continual messiness of our daily lives. Taking inspiration from social history and the evolution of housework, Gabecare have created an enjoyable installation which provokes storytelling and memories from our own families while also digging deeper and questioning the economy around housework and care. The exhibition also included objects selected by the artists from Museums and Galleries Edinburgh's social history collection.



Check our website for more information <https://travellinggallery.com/>.

Conservation for Wellbeing (Wards Affected – All)

Museums and Galleries have recently trialled an exciting new wellbeing project based at our Museum Collections Centre. We worked with community partners Outlook, Invisible Cities and Edinburgh Recovery Activities to rehouse collection items including bed sheets made of flour sacks, delicate gilded cups and Chinese board games. The project was delivered by conservation and outreach colleagues alongside a Museum Studies placement student.

The aims of the project were to provide valuable and mindful experiences through working hands on with collections, and to do so in a way that directly benefits the collections for which we care. Participants shared their own stories while learning new things about our city's past. Together, we handled, checked and packed a huge range of different artefacts, all to conservation sector standards. We saw participants' confidence and rapport with the museum team grow over the weeks, as they saw the tangible contribution they were making to the care of our collective heritage. One participant said 'my dimples are hurting, I'm smiling so much!'. One unexpected outcome was the offer of potential donations from participants, of objects that reflect gaps in our collection.

We are now considering how to expand the session model and work with our partners to continue this work on a longer-term basis.



Responding to the A.I. Challenge (Wards Affected – All)

Our news has been flooded recently with stories about the increasing use of Artificial Intelligence in many walks of life, with some advocating its benefits and others wary of what it might lead to. The City Art Centre is delighted to support this artistic response created by one of our own staff, Denny Hunter, in association with a range of emerging and established artists.

Artobotic – Human Response

Artobotic art vending machine continues to make art accessible and affordable to the general public with its new summer show, Human Response at the City Art Centre which seeks to explore how AI (artificial intelligence) could impact human creativity. Artists from a broad spectrum of disciplines have been invited to contribute miniature artworks which revolve around the topic of AI including such names as David Sherry, Robert Powell, Chad McCail, Eric Millikin, John Brown and many others. The works will vend from the machine for only £10 and will include a mixture of emerging talent as well as the established artists mentioned here.



Panel Show Discussion

Running in parallel to the show is a lively panel show discussion hosted by film maker Suzi Cavill and special guest speakers, Professor Chris Speed and Francesco Bentivegna from Bristol University which strikes at the heart of why this is important for everyone.

<https://youtu.be/nvgR0FIBb9A>

Public Engagement

Public engagement will include a survey which will gather data on visitor experience and thoughts related to the show which will then be available for the service to use.

Further Information

For more information, please contact Denny Hunter at artobotic@gmail.com.

International Visit Feedback (Wards Affected – All)

Culture and Wellbeing's Senior Culture and Events Officer attended the final meeting of the [Story Valley](#) ERASMUS project. Termed a 'multiplier event', the purpose of the meeting was to share the outcomes of the project, the work that has been delivered and the resources that have been created with policy makers and interested stakeholders so the project can be replicated in new locations. An International Visit feedback form detailing the visit is attached as Appendix 1.

World Photography Day – Edinburgh Living History at Lauriston Castle (Wards Affected – 1 Almond)

To mark World Photography Day on 19 August, Edinburgh Living History, volunteers at Lauriston Castle recreated scenes from some of the historic photos we have of the Reids, the last owners of the Castle. Edinburgh Living History continue to be at the heart of our events programmes throughout the year, and have been our volunteers since we receiving Lottery money in 1998 and over the years have won duplicate awards for their engagement.

Facebook story [here](#).

Peter Howson Exhibition – Related Events (Wards Affected – All)

Associated events run in conjunction with the Peter Howson Retrospective exhibition have been very busy. The events have been exploring pertinent themes in the exhibition like mental health, neurodiversity, genocide, religion and Howson's place in the history of Scottish art. Adult creative

workshops have been held, with several including a life drawing class with a model. Schools, Higher and Further Education colleges and community groups have been welcomed into the exhibition who have all had free access – free access was also offered to Ukrainian families and their Scottish host families.

Work to make the Howson exhibition more accessible has been carried out, developing BSL and digital Visually Impaired Tours – link to access these is [here](#).

Libraries Activities and Events (Wards Affected – All)

Central Library

Taiwanese Exhibition is on the theme of Taiwan literature, 'Sailing onto the World's Stage' organised by the National Museum of Taiwan Literature based in Tainan City, Taiwan.

Launched at the Scottish Storytelling Centre and showing at Central Library the exhibition tours to cultural institutions in the Netherlands, Germany and Austria. The exhibition introduces us to the history of Taiwan and its literature and focuses on a range of topics in literature. Themes include human rights literature, nature writing, women's literature, LGBTQ topics, identity and even food literature. The exhibition is a fascinating illumination into the history of Taiwan, its culture and how this has been reflected through its writing.

Reference Library @The Fringe

Library by day, music venue by night! During August Tinderbox Orchestra played nine shows to packed audiences in Edinburgh Central Library's majestic Reference Library.

Tinderbox Orchestra is like no other orchestra and transformed the perceptions of what an orchestra is as they brought together rappers and singers with soaring strings, heavy brass, woodwind and a thundering backline. Tinderbox made a point of linking up with local bands, forging new connections and breaking new ground. This year's show saw collaborations with Chinese alternative folk-punk ensemble Dawangang, alt-folk duo The Jellyman's Daughter, award-winning Scottish composer Luci Holland, trad-inspired singer-songwriter HOUSEKIND and spoken-word and rap collective Culture Clan. Tinderbox Orchestra Fringe shows have included Libraries staff member Hannah McCooke as part of their sell-out Fringe shows. Hannah, in her capacity as a poet, has been discussing the work of the instrument libraries in her branch and performing three original poems raising awareness as well as funds for the instrument library project.

Family Fun Days at Moredun, Drumbrae, Craigmillar and Sighthill Libraries

These were held at the libraries over the summer holiday period. These days follow on from the success of our Warm and Welcoming Days, this time with a focus on mental and physical wellbeing. The model consists of providing fun family activities whilst linking the community to partners who can support them. Once again, a range of partners came along to support their communities by getting vital information directly to families. Community Police, Plant Based Treaty, Thrive Collective, SAMH, Health in Mind, Volunteer Edinburgh, Voice Ability and Active Travel all had stalls. Activities provided included sports delivered by Access Parkour, Edinburgh South Community Football club. Visitors enjoyed, badgemaking, Face painting, crafts, Yoga

Storytime, and joy of movement classes and community music. A range of healthy snacks and drinks were provided by Community Foods, ASDA, Tummies not Trash and Broomhouse Hub.

Edinburgh Libraries reached over 400 service users, with great feedback from each event including this comment from a local parent in Drumrae: ‘Just a MASSIVE THANK YOU for organizing such a lovely event today. My girls had a blast. You all are a great team and it’s always a pleasure coming to that library thanks to the wonderful job you do.’



Blackhall Library Open Garden Day

Friends of Blackhall Library worked hard last year and transformed the courtyard garden into a lovely space. The open garden day invited people to see and enjoy the garden with a cuppa and cake whilst also promoting the library as a community space along with our services.

There was a book sale, plant sale and donated crocheted items were sold and used as prizes for children’s activities with all donations going to the Friends of Blackhall Library. Children’s activities included a Dinosaur photo booth, craft, a sand pit and a garden scavenger hunt. Over 170 people attended.



Central Children’s Art Club

The Art Club is back and is a free programme of creative play and learning for primary-aged children. It’s a time to explore art-making, build and foster curiosity, care, and consideration, and hopefully an ever more creative relationship with the world around us. Our ethos is to be as sustainable as we can in thinking about the materials we’re using and what we’re making. Looking at cave art and making our own drawing tools. Thinking about houses and homes and making treehouses. Looking at puppetry – making shadow puppets and glove puppets. Making natural inks from plants and items in our kitchens.

Feedback from our young participants “My favourite session was making puppets.” “I liked when we made the “trees” on a square cardboard and with clay.” “I am happy that art club will be on next year as well 😊.”



Muirhouse Library Creative Fridays

Friday afternoons are a busy one at Muirhouse library (in Edinburgh College Granton Campus), we run two groups the Friday Crafters for ages 4+ and the Tabletop Gaming Group for 11+.

For the Crafters each week is a different craft tailored to a specific theme like Pride Month, Empathy Day or International Talk like a Pirate Day. It has been so popular that it has been necessary for the group to run all afternoon so that there are no disappointed children.

At the Tabletop Gaming group for the older children and adults, as well as playing the games, a big part of the group is teaching miniature painting skills and techniques. Library staff have enjoyed seeing how they improve and take great inspiration from their enthusiasm for the hobby.



Stockbridge Library

The library hosted Board Game afternoon and Big Bug hunt to celebrate National Play Day. There was chess, Snakes and Ladders, Labyrinth, Puzzles, Pictionary and building blocks on offer. Parents were so grateful that they had access to fun children’s activities whilst it was pouring outside. Feedback received from parents included, "Libraries are blessings to parents as keeping kids entertained and active during school holidays can be expensive!"

The Big Bug hunt took place, where families were provided with a bug hunt kit and a record sheet. A great time was had by all on Stockbridge Library’s first, ‘Big Bug Hunt’. No stone was left unturned, and no bush left unexplored by our intrepid band of young naturalists.

Craigmillar Library Summer Programme

In collaboration with Edinburgh Science Festival, they hosted four STEM activities.

Ella's Wobble, a science-based storytelling and musical instrument building craft for 0–3-year-olds.

Lego 'build the change' challenged young scientists aged 6+ to create solutions to modern problems such as climate change through Lego prototyping.

The vibrant performers from Edinburgh Science led 6 shows throughout the day in the garden, each exploring fun scientific principles with bells, whistles and plenty of soggy staff, which the kids thoroughly enjoyed. In the stacks of crates in the children's area, visitors found huge dinosaur bones, all ready to be constructed into giant skeletons as a collaborative effort.

To top it all off, visitors enjoyed multiple trolleys full of healthy food for growing minds!

595 people attended. Some attendees even took to social media to share their enjoyment!

'Beautiful event! It was FULL of unforgettable activities.....👍👍👍' '💚💚 It was a fantastic afternoon.

People's Know How have returned to Craigmillar library to offer customers weekly digital support drop-ins. They offer a range of support from navigating the Internet, becoming more informed around financial health to managing entering data on government gateway sites. The sessions promote digital and social inclusion, increase employability and empower library customers to access resources which improve their skills and wellbeing.

BookBug special – Craigmillar Library celebrated Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month with a themed Bookbug session. This special Bookbug session celebrated the GRT History Month with plenty of music, and a selection of beautiful stories by Richard O'Neill which celebrate life in the GRT community.

Summer Craft Club has continued with over 80 children taking part.

Sighthill Library

The library attended the Broomhouse Street Party. As part of the offering, attendees enjoyed: badge making; playing hook a duck, Library information including membership; concessionary bus pass applications; our online services; Bookbug and the Summer Reading Challenge.

