

Leader's Report

the capital coalition

August 2012

Good Progress



Since my last report in June I feel the [Capital Coalition](#) has made good progress in a number of areas and that we have significantly changed the way things are done by showing we are prepared to listen and respond to stakeholders and the public. I hope you will agree, but if not, or if you want to bring something to my attention, please [email me](#).

This has been a significantly upbeat month with our Deputy Leader Councillor Steve Cardownie quick off the mark to show how we intend to complement the celebrations of Olympic achievements in Glasgow by granting Sir Chris Hoy the [Freedom of the City of Edinburgh](#) at the Council meeting this month. A civic reception and other celebrations will also follow to honour Sir Chris and his Olympic team-mates, coaches, volunteers, officials, friends and family associated with Edinburgh who all contributed to the success.

I couldn't allow this report to go out without a mention of the hugely successful [Edinburgh International Culture Summit](#) in the city this month. Delegations from more than 30 countries visited our world leading festival city to undertake a range of discussions which will enable them to make connections that will benefit our [festivals](#) and the city economy for years to come.

Steady as she goes

I'm aware [tram works](#) still look unsightly and things are still difficult, but we are making steady progress on the construction programme and the first trams are due to be ready for passengers in the Summer of 2014.

The project is in its peak construction phase with some 1000 people working on what is Scotland's second largest infrastructure project. (After the Forth replacement crossing.)

While I am determined, along with the Transport Convener Councillor Lesley Hinds to ensure delivery of the project, we are also committed to listen to the concerns of those affected so we can minimise the effects of the construction programme on their lives. For example, we have been able to change traffic management arrangements and diversion routes in the Broughton Street/Albany Street and Abercromby Place areas after taking on board the concerns of local residents and traders.

We have also erected more directional signs in the City Centre and East End area to help people more easily find their way to local shops, businesses and city centre landmarks.

In the east end/Broughton Street area currently affected by diversions we have been able to take action to lessen the effect of the works.

On Leith Walk, we continue to meet with members of the local community to make sure that the £5.5 million improvement programme meets their expectations and we will work with them to reduce disruption as far as possible.

Firm action – new service

Firm action has been taken against those few individuals who mismanaged [property repairs](#) with a number of suspensions and dismissals.

Options to create a brand new service are being presented for [public consultation](#). Rather than, as tends to happen at present, the Council being the first port of call to manage home owner's repairs, the new service will expand provision of advice and information whilst placing on the owners the primary responsibility for managing their property repairs or maintenance.

I'm aware that this will not be universally popular but it will mean home owners will be more in control of their own home maintenance and the Council will only be used when attempts at self-management have failed as in cities elsewhere in the country. The emergency service, which responds where there is a risk to public health or safety, is likely to be retained.

Your comments on the following options are most welcome as part of the [consultation](#):

- property factoring
- sample inspections of listed buildings

- reintroduction of the Edinburgh Stair Partnership
- use of a statutory tenement management scheme.

Reduce Reuse Recycle – bin collections are changing

We are making changes to the [recycling and waste collection](#) service to make it simpler and help us increase the amount we recycle in each home.

From 10 September, garden waste, household waste and food waste collections will now take place on the same day. Food bins will continue to be collected weekly and brown (garden) and green (household) bins will alternate each week.

Residents affected by the changes have already received information by mail and new calendars will be sent closer to the time. We need to reduce waste to landfill for environmental reasons as well as the cost and with everybody's help that will mean more to invest in improving local services.

Young people deserve better

If you haven't already heard, the [Edinburgh Guarantee](#) is a vision that all sectors of the city will work together to ensure that every school leaver in Edinburgh will have a positive destination such as employment, apprenticeship, internship or job focused education.

The Council is leading and we have provided 50 apprenticeships and 80 training places so far with more to come. We have been heartened by the response across all sectors of the city which has enabled us to match 464 young people into a positive destination. We need to do more so keep the ideas and offers coming.

If you are an employer in Edinburgh and would like to participate, please [e-mail the Edinburgh Guarantee team](#).

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