



April 2017

Ongoing satisfaction with life in the Capital



The latest [Edinburgh People Survey results](#) made positive reading when they were published last month, showing that the vast majority of respondents (94%) are satisfied with life here in the Capital.

Services like public transport, parks and our calendar of cultural events continue to see a high level of satisfaction too, while results showed residents across the city feel secure in their communities.

I was particularly heartened by the sense of inclusion demonstrated by the results, with more people than ever agreeing their neighbourhood is a place where people of different backgrounds get along (84%), and 94% saying Edinburgh is welcoming and accessible to people of all ages.

As ever, the survey also gives us the opportunity to reflect on the areas where public perception is poorer. Responses allow us to pinpoint services, such as street cleaning and road maintenance, where people feel we could be doing better, and help us to make plans for improvement, to the benefit of everyone who lives in and visits the city.

Very much open for business

Edinburgh has been featuring in the news again for all the right reasons this month after being named the [best city in the UK to start a new business](#). Our speedy internet connections, reasonable office rent and a substantial pool of 'tech savvy' students all played their part.

This came hot on the heels of another, and even more impressive, result courtesy of JLL Investment's [Intensity Index](#), which ranked Edinburgh fourth in the world for property investment. This is remarkable when you consider that only Oslo, London and Munich scored more highly, with the likes of New York and Sydney further down the Top 10.

Of course, the evidence of this is right on our doorstep as the New Waverley and Haymarket developments continue to progress well and work getting underway on the £1 billion Edinburgh St James project.

Keeping Edinburgh Beautiful

Congratulations to the team working on the *Our Edinburgh* campaign, which was awarded 'Programme of the Year' at this year's Keep Scotland Beautiful Local Environment Quality Awards. The award recognises the great job they've done to encourage pride in the city.

We're always looking at ways of improving our waste and cleansing services, but by raising awareness of anti-social behaviour like fly-tipping, litter-dropping and dog fouling, *Our Edinburgh* is encouraging the public to do their bit too – and it's already having an impact.

In its latest phase in Gorgie and Dalry, the campaign saw litter complaints drop by 18% and 13 fixed penalty notices issued, while citywide there has been a 44% increase in special uplift requests.

Grand designs on Ross Theatre

It boasts one of the finest backdrops in the country and it seems the rest of the world agrees. The competition to replace the Ross Bandstand in West Princes Street Gardens is gathering pace after 125 groups of architects and designers spanning 22 countries were swiftly narrowed down last month.

The worldwide interest should come as no surprise. Images of the venue are beamed to TV screens across the world every Hogmanay and during the Festival Fireworks Concert each August. After flying in from Japan, the USA and across Europe to visit the site earlier this month, the [seven shortlisted architect teams](#) will have until June to submit their designs for a new pavilion.

An exhibition will be held by the Ross Development Trust, led by benefactor Norman Springford, this summer to showcase their concept designs and to receive local feedback, with a winner expected to be confirmed in August 2017.

Fighting inequality with the OneCity Trust

The OneCity Trust was established in 2003 (with the Lord Provost's 'Rapid Action Fund' added in 2013) to support the most vulnerable in our society and, over the last 12 months alone, has channelled over £125,000 into projects which help close the wealth gap here in the Capital.

Every community has a responsibility to care for its citizens and the OneCity Trust relies on generous donations from Edinburgh people and businesses. In the last year, it has received more than £36,300 support from Travis Perkins, £3,000 from CGI Ltd and over £6,000 from Harvey Nichols' carrier bag levy.

Countless individuals continue to pledge their support too. The Trust's President, the Lord Provost, will 'brave' the Virgin Money London Marathon this weekend. With Sunday's starting gun looming, you can show the Lord Provost and the OneCity Trust your support through Donald Wilson's marathon [donation page](#).

If you know an organisation or scheme which fights inequality and promotes inclusion, applications will be open until the end of May for 2017 grant funding. [Find out more](#) about applying for a OneCity Trust grant.

Have your say on 4 May

The local elections are almost upon us (as, of course, is another General Election!) and voters across the country will be heading to the polls to elect our new councillors on Thursday 4 May.

A few reminders about this year's vote:

- Some polling places have changed, so check your poll card or [our online guide](#) to find out where yours is before you head out
- If filling in a postal ballot, be careful to put your date of birth in the relevant bit, rather than that day's date (it often happens!), then make sure to sign it
- Use numbers when filling in the ballot, with 1 marking your first preference, 2 your second, and so on. Find out more about the [single transferable vote system](#)

These elections are your chance to influence how services in Edinburgh are delivered over the next five years by selecting the candidates you think will do the best job for the Capital. Do please have your say on 4 May!

Spelling out Edinburgh's history this summer

After transforming into the Edinburgh International Science Festival's quirky laboratory this spring, the City Art Centre is making way for another takeover in a few weeks time.

Our flagship gallery will open its doors to one of its most ambitious exhibitions when hundreds of artefacts and artworks are drawn together and placed on display for the very first time.

Spanning 60,000 years, [Edinburgh Alphabet: An A-Z of the city's collection](#) will feature never-before-seen treasures from the city's collections. For anyone with a love of this city and its rich history, this free exhibition really shouldn't be missed.

The last word

As you may be aware, many councillors, including myself, have chosen not to stand on 4 May. I haven't done the maths, but the cumulative experience leaving the Council must add up to many hundreds of years.

As current Council Leader, and on behalf of all the Group Leaders, I'd like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to all the retiring councillors who have given dedicated public service to their local communities over so many years.

I'd also like to wish all remaining councillors, and new candidates, all the very best of luck. It really is a privilege to serve your local community – and you never know how long that privilege will last – so please do enjoy it while you can.

Huge thanks also to our dedicated workforce, who have shown nothing but enormous understanding, adaptability, and sheer dedication to public service, over recent years. It's been my pleasure to work with you all.

And finally, many thanks to the people that matter most: the residents of Edinburgh. You have given us the chance to make a contribution to the ongoing evolution of this most beautiful city; one which I've had the good fortune to call my family home for the last 24 years.

Stay in the picture

Keep yourself in the picture with our [news section online](#). If you wish to unsubscribe please [email](#) us. Watch live full Council and some committee meetings on our [webcast](#). Join the debate on Twitter [#edinwebcast](#)

[Follow us on twitter](#)

Watch on our [webcast](#)

[Follow us on Facebook](#)

