

2050 Edinburgh City Vision

A vision for our changing city

Why do we need a city vision for Edinburgh?

Throughout its history Edinburgh has been a city of innovation and change. The last thirty years have been no different. In the early 1980's Edinburgh was a city with population in decline, facing a changing economy and significant social health challenges. In 2016 we are a successful city where population is growing more quickly than any other major city in the UK, and whose strong economy and quality of life is recognised across the world.

We know that the vibrancy and growth we have experienced in recent years brings challenges. Whether it is in increased inequality and pockets of severe deprivation, or in increased pressure on our city infrastructure and environment, we know that the city needs to adapt and change again in the next thirty years if we are to continue to be a great place to live, to work and to visit.

To help us deliver that change, we need a clear vision of what the Edinburgh of 2050 should be like, for its residents, its businesses and its visitors. Too often, city plans and strategies are focused on short term outcomes and objectives and miss the opportunity to make significant, transformative change. Developing this vision will give us an opportunity to think about the long term future of our city and build a meaningful, tailored statement of the kind of city Edinburgh aspires to be. We want this to be a vision that is specific to Edinburgh, brings together everyone with an interest in the city, and unlocks the creative potential of collaboration across all sectors.

Learning from other cities

Many other cities across the UK and further afield have developed similar projects in recent years. In New York, the city plan sets out a vision for 'A strong and just city'. In Vancouver, where city visions have been an integral part of city planning since the 1940's, the city works together towards a vision of being the 'world's greenest city'. In Reading, the city's vision is for a 'smart, sustainable' city, while Milton Keynes is working with business and other stakeholders to develop a plan to 'make a great city greater'.

The learning from all these projects show that the development of a clear vision – developed, built and shared with residents, businesses, and public agencies - can bring significant benefits for a city. These include:

- Building new relationships and partnerships
- Challenging assumptions and generating new ideas for how to improve our city
- Building compelling narratives for city promotion and confidence in our prospects
- Encouraging buy-in for future decision making
- Early identification of risks and challenges
- Developing a friendly, co-operative environment between environment between investors, city authorities, and the public.

A key lesson from all other cities is that successful vision projects cannot be seen as the preserve of a single institution. City councils are well placed to co-ordinate and facilitate the project, but broad participation and engagement is critical if the project is to be a success. That is why we need to use all of our relationships and partnership to build a new vision for Edinburgh. This city vision will only be achieved if it built from the broadest possible base of support and reflects the voices of all our residents and stakeholders.

Building a city vision

Our approach to building a city vision for Edinburgh

Best practice learning from other city vision projects suggests four stages to the vision building process:

- **Stage 1: Preparation and mobilisation.** Including scoping of the project, identification of key stakeholders and partners, and development of an approach to engagement.
- **Stage 2: Engagement and vision building:** Including wide, broad based engagement with groups across the city to gather views on our aspirations for what the Edinburgh of 2050 should be like.
- **Stage 3: Drafting the vision:** Including analysis of engagement findings and development of a draft vision ready for consultation
- **Stage 4: Final consultation and publication:** In which the draft vision is refined through public consultation and a final agreed vision statement is published.

For our 2050 Edinburgh City Vision project, these stages have been planned for the following timescales, with a public launch planned for 27th September, public engagement from end September to December 2016, working towards a final vision published in summer 2017:

Phase 1: Project Launch

27th September 2016

Phase 2: Engagement and vision building

October to December 2016

Phase 3: Drafting the vision

January to March 2017

Phase 4: Final Consultation

April to July 2017

Reaching out

The key challenge in any city vision project is encouraging and facilitating the required range and breadth of engagement with residents, business, partners and stakeholders across the city. Our approach to this project in Edinburgh is built around multiple channels of engagement, all focused on encouraging a conversation around the same core set of questions. The programme includes:

- **Online engagement:** The project will gather the ideas and opinions of Edinburgh people through open questions posted on our online Dialogue app. Dialogue is an idea generation tool that allows anyone to post their ideas, comment and engage in discussion on existing ideas, and to vote on ideas that others have posted. The tool offers a way to have a single platform for online engagement that is suitable for almost everyone.
To make it easier for people to find areas of special interest or expertise, we have created 16 themes within the Dialogue tool that cover all aspects of life and work in Edinburgh, from sustainability and the natural and build environments, to education and enterprise, transport and future technology.
- **Facilitated workshops:** Alongside our online engagement activity, a number of organisations across the city are hosting workshop sessions and focus groups to gather views and opinions on our engagement themes and targeted towards specific partnerships, sectors forums and groups of interest across the city
- **Creative community engagement activity:** Further activity underway is focused on tailored engagement with community groups and residents across the city, as well as specific projects and activities tailored towards engagement with young people in the city. These include social media programmes, engagement work with youth groups in the city, pupil led assemblies, film and media projects, and other activities.

Framing the conversation

Across all our engagement channels, the project is designed to enable a creative and open discussion about the future of our city. In particular, participants will be encouraged to consider the city in terms of:

- Edinburgh's people: **You, your family and your community**
- Edinburgh's economy: **Your job, your business, and your money**
- Edinburgh's environment: **Your home, your street, and your planet**

Across all these dimensions, the conversation is asking for opinions and ideas around three questions:

- **What is great about Edinburgh as a city in 2016?**
- **What could be better?**
and
- **What should Edinburgh be like in 2050?**



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