



## Edinburgh City Centre Transformation

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### Background

The ambition of the project is to build on the strengths and qualities that have served the city well in the past and, at the same time, shape it for the future. In a fast changing environment, the city centre must remain the heart of the city's cultural and civic life, the focal point for its economy and one of Scotland's most iconic and important locations.

This project will look at the city centre as a place to live, work and visit and aspire to make the changes needed to meet the city's growing needs and demands. It aims to create an action plan for a city that is sustainable, healthy and safe for our future generations.

The Central Edinburgh Transformation is in line with the recently launched Management Plan for the World Heritage Site. The two will work together to enhance the built environment, the public realm and support liveability within the city centre.

### Vision

*'Our shared vision is an exceptional capital city centre that is for all, a space for people to live, work, visit and play. A place that is for the future, enriched by the legacy of the past.'*

*To achieve this vision, we will work collaboratively to create a city centre that is the heart of Edinburgh's communities, its cultural and civic life, and the focal point for its economy.'*

***'Under Central Edinburgh Transformation, we want to bring issues like congestion, street clutter and poor air quality to the fore, working with residents, communities and businesses to rethink transport priorities, in turn unlocking the potential of our historic streets.'***

*Cllr Lesley Macinnes, Transport and Environment Convenor*

### Opportunities and Challenges

The successful co-existence of people who live, work and play in the city centre, spread across an extraordinary topography and urban form, is what makes Edinburgh the special place it is and what gives it its world heritage site status. But for all of Edinburgh's outstanding qualities, some streets and spaces of the city centre remain congested and cluttered.

Edinburgh is also a growing city. It is expanding faster than any other UK city and by 2040 will have a population of 600,000. A growing city needs a city centre that works for everyone across all its functions. To pull this together we will prepare a plan that sets out a clear ambition for the city centre in the context of the wider city evolution.

There is recognition that we need to reduce congestion in the city centre and the key to doing this is improving the efficiency of public transport and investing in walking and cycling infrastructure.

Making it easier to walk or cycle through high quality infrastructure as well as communicating the impact and benefit of high quality public realm on people's health and well-being, are key components of creating a change in behaviour and a shift away from private cars.

## Project Alignment

Work has begun to ensure alignment across projects and programmes to deliver a consistent approach and high quality.

A number of high profile projects are already underway (or committed to) in the city centre, that seek to improve the quality and experience of the public realm, prioritise access for people on foot, bicycle and public transport including The City Centre East-West Cycle Link, Meadows to George Street – Streets for People and the preliminary design for George Street and First New Town.

In addition, Edinburgh's Transport Strategy is currently being reviewed and the development of a Low Emission Zone, aimed at improving air quality, is being developed in conjunction with the city centre transformation programme.

## Get Involved

The process to determine the public realm across the city centre will be both people-led and evidence-led, informed by meaningful engagement with people and organisations across the city.

It is recognised that success will lie in collaboration with organisations and individuals in order to generate creative solutions to the challenges the city faces in terms of population growth and the quality and capacity of its streets, public spaces and transport infrastructure. A website for the project will be launched in the near future.

### Key periods for public and stakeholder engagement:

May - June 2018: Stakeholder events

September – October 2018: Public events

A final report will be ready by spring next year with a medium-term action plan for the city centre to be implemented before the end of this Council term.

