

Balerno market square completed

A new market square is the centre piece of a £250,000 revamp to Balerno after a major cash injection from the City of Edinburgh Council. The ceremony for the re-furbished Balerno Main Street starts on Saturday 14th August at 11a.m. and the ribbon will be officially cut by Tom McCall, the longest-serving member of Balerno Community Council at 11.25a.m.

The square forms part of the improvements carried out to Main Street under the Council's Urban Centres Programme (UCP) which aims to improve local shopping centres by making them more accessible and vibrant.

Other changes include the reconstruction of the main road, upgrades to surfaces with Caithness stone slabs and granite setts, new street furniture and new street lighting.

In another major change a new Traffic Regulation Order is now in place which allows traffic wardens to issue parking tickets to any vehicles entering or parking in Main Street that are not blue badge holders or delivery vehicles.

Taking pride of place in the Market Square is the winning entry in a competition for pupils of Dean Park Primary School who were tasked with coming up with a design to celebrate the history of Balerno.

Jema Robertson of Primary 5/6 was the winner and her design now takes pride of place in the Market Square embedded within a Caithness stone slab. She also received a framed plaque of her design.

Balerno Main Street was selected by the Council and Pentlands Neighbourhood Partnership as a priority streetscape project that could benefit from UCP investment.

Funding of £100,000 came from the UCP was topped up with £150,000 from other Council funds. Consultation then followed with Balerno Community Council, local businesses and residents about the proposed improvements.

Councillor Paul Edie, said: "This investment will make a real difference to thriving centres such as Balerno who have a real sense of pride in their community.

"The changes to Main Street make it more attractive to shoppers and tourists and the new vehicle restrictions will reduce congestion. I am sure residents and local businesses will give a huge thumbs up to the upgrades."

Tom McCall, of the Balerno Community Council, said: "The whole area is looking really smart and because Main Street is, in planning terms, a conservation area it needed a higher environmental standard than elsewhere which it has achieved."

The UCP was made up of £1.2m which was to be divided between each of the six neighbourhood partnerships. The South West Neighbourhood Office and Pentlands Neighbourhood Partnership split the money between Balerno and Calder.

Work started in Balerno in March 2010 and was completed four months later.