

# Rates Relief for West End Businesses



City of Edinburgh Council Transport Convener Councillor Lesley Hinds today welcomed an agreement by the Lothian Assessor to a proposed reduction in business rates for traders on Shandwick Place.

This reduction is the result of work by the Council's Trams team in an effort to help support traders along the route of the trams. An agreement has been established with the Assessor that traders in Shandwick Place had a strong case for a reduction in their Rateable Value because of the impact of the trams works on their businesses.

Around 60 traders in Shandwick Place – including retailers, bars and restaurants – can now claim a reduction in their non domestic Rateable Value from the restart of street works in autumn 2011 to scheduled completion of street works in spring 2013.

The Council Trams team has now written to these traders outlining the steps they can take to accept the offer from the Assessor and offering to provide a standard letter that can be used for this purpose.

With the principle now established, it is now hoped that other traders whose premises are on the line of the tram route will be eligible for RV reductions. The Trams team will write to all traders on the tram route, offering guidance on what steps they can take to make a claim for a RV reduction on their business premises.

In representing the interests of traders, the Council's Trams team compared rental information provided by businesses in

Shandwick Place with similar information from another part of the city unaffected by tram works, with the aim of demonstrating the material impact of the works.

As a result of these findings, the Assessor has agreed to a special rateable value reduction for Shandwick Place business traders affected by the tram works, which would be a full and final settlement of all outstanding appeals.

Councillor Lesley Hinds, Transport Convener, said: "I am pleased to hear that the Assessor has taken this decision, which will provide some financial relief to traders directly impacted by the tram works. The Council has been keen to do what we can to help businesses in this part of the city so it is good to have this result.

"While the decision only applies to those traders with frontages on Shandwick Place at this stage, we are optimistic that subsequent claims from traders in other parts of the city, who have been directly affected by the tram works, should deliver rates reductions for them as well.

"I would strongly encourage all traders who are on the tram route, and who believe the rental value of their business has been impacted by the tram works, to consider claiming an RV reduction. We will continue to support them to do so and this week we will be writing to all traders along the route of the trams, offering them guidance on how to make their claims."

We wrote about the tram works [and their effect on the West End here.](#)