

VIDEO – Edinburgh Apps winners

An app to locate every recycling point in the city, a project to encourage the public to shop locally and technology which helps blind people to cross roads more safely were just some of the winners from the first Edinburgh Apps event held recently.

The city's inaugural civic challenge, which encouraged members of the public to develop an app, product concept or website using the Council's available data, was hailed a success.

[Edinburgh Apps](#) is the only project of its kind run by a Council in Scotland, and aims to encourage small businesses and individuals to use data sets provided by the Council and its partners to develop an app or website that will help people living in the Capital. These included real-time car parking information, winter gritting routes, cycle parking locations and information on businesses in Edinburgh.

The competition final at the [Creative Exchange](#) in Leith involved a number of high calibre entries pitched to judges – ranging from an app that encourages shoppers to visit local businesses to a crowd-generated calendar.

The challenge was split into four core themes – economy and tourism, transport, environment and health and wellbeing plus a fifth, technology and innovation, offering Council support to two entries. Entrants were encouraged to develop an app or product that would help improve the lives of people living, working or visiting the city.

Entries were judged for each category by an expert panel: Professor Aaron Quigley, Chair of Human Computer Interaction in the School of Computer Science at the University of St Andrews, Claudette Jones, Chief Information Officer for the

City of Edinburgh Council, and Dave Meikle, Head of Digital in Sopra Group's Public Sector & Utilities division.

✘ Councillor Alasdair Rankin, the city's Finance & Resources Convener, said:- "I'm incredibly impressed by the range of entries to Edinburgh Apps, all of which made great use of open data to benefit the city. Technology is key to ensuring Edinburgh is a thriving and successful place to live and work, and events such as this demonstrate the breadth of ideas on offer.

"I look forward to seeing the winning projects progressed and developed and I'm excited to see the innovative solutions future events like Edinburgh Apps produce."

Gavin Neate, whose Neatebox product concept – an app to assist road crossing for people with disabilities and loss of sight – won both the transport category and technology and innovation support, said: "I really enjoyed the event and I was surprised that I won, I really felt that the other entries were very worthwhile.

"I'm glad to have the opportunity to work on my project more, and it makes it a lot easier if I have buy-in from the council. I'm now hoping I will have the opportunity to talk to some experts in the field and to be able to come up with something that's very useful."

Other winners were Precedent Communications (Edinburgh) in the environment category for the Trashman recycling app, while Steven Kay topped the economy and tourism category with his Shop Local mobile concept.

The Edinburgh Reporter met up with Steven who explained how his app will work.

The health and wellbeing category was won by Alistair Andrew

and Andrew Bone with Joint Equipment Store, a concept to improve delivery routes for assistive equipment.

The two winners for technology and innovation were Shop Local and Neatebox, while a recycling app developed by Efzin was given the prize for Wildcard App, which was not specific to any theme.

We met Gavin Neate designer of Neate Box and someone he knew well happened along with her guide dog, Caspar, just when we needed them!

A number of other entries received honourable mentions, including Edinburgh Air, a project to map the city's air quality, Your City, a platform aiming to help the public report issues and complaints to the Council and Edinburgh Options, a directory helping medical staff access local services.

A variety of prizes tailored for the winning products were presented, including a marketing master class from Marketing Edinburgh, workspace at the Creative Exchange business incubator in Leith and memberships for the business network WeDo. Winners of technology and innovation support, Neatebox and Shop Local, will now have Council help to develop their concepts into final products.

Sponsors of the event, which took place on Sunday (10th November), were: Open Innovation Project, Enterprise and Innovation, Sopra Group, WeDo, BT, University of Edinburgh Informatics, Scottish Government, Storm ID, Creative Exchange, McRobb, The List, ISD Scotland, Tell Me, HP, Marketing Edinburgh, Festivals Edinburgh, 02 and Connectedinburgh.

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