

# A Bright Night in Muirhouse



The North Edinburgh community of Pennywell shone in a whole new light last night as residents gathered for an evening of entertainment at the unveiling of a new art installation designed for the local area.

The event 'Bright Nights', was held at Muirhouse Shopping Centre attracting people of all ages from around the area to the opening of the first exhibition of its kind.

The event was organised by North Edinburgh Arts and supported by regeneration developer Urban Union and the City of Edinburgh Council.



The art installation was created by artist Alice Betts and was set up to transform the area around Muirhouse Shopping Centre. It also aimed to help local residents get more enjoyment and use from a community space that was previously left vacant and abandoned.

As well as the artwork and colourful lights, there were performances from local choir The Timebank Temptations, a series of painting with light workshops with top photographer Kenny Bean and a surprise flash mob who gave a very lively performance.

Members of the local community were also caught on camera and will help form part of a new short-film being made about Pennywell directed by Angelica Kroeger.

**Kate Wimpess, director at North Edinburgh Arts, said:** "Last night's winter arts event at Pennywell was a great success with residents gathering to see this very special installation. The 'Bright Nights' event provided the opportunity for local residents to celebrate the beauty of

their local community and to look at a previously run-down shopping centre in a whole new light.

“We hope that as a result of last night’s celebration that everyone will use this space more in the future for creative and community activities.”

The event was part of an overall arts strategy supported by The City of Edinburgh Council.

It marked the beginning of a seven-year plan also supported by Urban Union and Creative Scotland, incorporating opportunities for the local community – new and arriving – to come together to draw, play, grow and perform.



**Councillor Cammy Day, The City of Edinburgh Council said:** “The Bright Nights winter arts event was a fantastic example of what we are hoping to create in Pennywell – a close-knit community living in good quality and modern homes. Last night’s event was a great opportunity for people to have a look at what’s been completed so far on site. I hope that this is the start of many other similar, community-based events at Pennywell.”

‘Bright Nights’ was just one part of Urban Union’s regeneration programme at Pennywell Living, which aims to create new public open spaces, apprenticeships for local people and a community benefits programme providing a range of activities and events for local people as part of the overall regeneration plan..

**Craig Kidd, from Urban Union, said:** “Urban Union regards art as an integral part of how we develop and grow the Pennywell area.

“Through working with North Edinburgh Arts, we can encourage residents to take pride in their surroundings and further

build on the well-established community. The 'Bright Nights' event was a great way to get this started."

The development of the Pennywell area is a result of a major investment of £42 million by The City of Edinburgh Council's 21st Century Homes programme, delivering 356 new social and mid-market rent homes for the Council, alongside 363 new properties for private sale.

***Photos Greg Macvean – 07971 826 457***